

# MY TRAVELS IN THE EAST

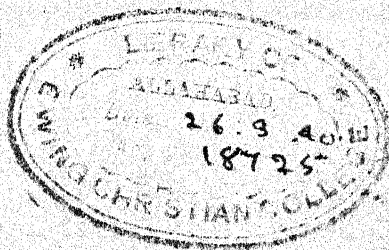
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3RD EDITION

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KSHITISH CHANDRA BANERJEE

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To

*my mother*

*Late Sarojini Banerjee*



## PREFACE

It is, indeed, a great pleasure for me to express at the very beginning of the preface my deep sense of gratitude to those friends and admirers of mine who helped me when I had no funds, and inspired me with hope and courage when my spirit failed and despondency came over me while carrying out the perilous task of world-tour on foot and on a bicycle, but for whose help, financial and otherwise, my daring attempt might have ended in a failure. I treasure in the bosom of my heart the appreciation of my little enterprising spirit by so great persons as Mahatma Gandhi, H. H. late Maharajadhiraj of Patiala, H. H. Maharajah of Sirmoor, H. H. Maharajah of Jodhpur, H. H. Nawab of Bhopal, Pandit Malavyaji, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir N. N. Sircar, Dr. M. Shaha and Dr. Rajendra Prosad. In the course of my travels I had occasions to receive friendly assistance from many a youngman at home and abroad whom I may not have any opportunity in my life to meet again—to every one of them I offer to-day my greetings of love and respect with thanks and gratitude.

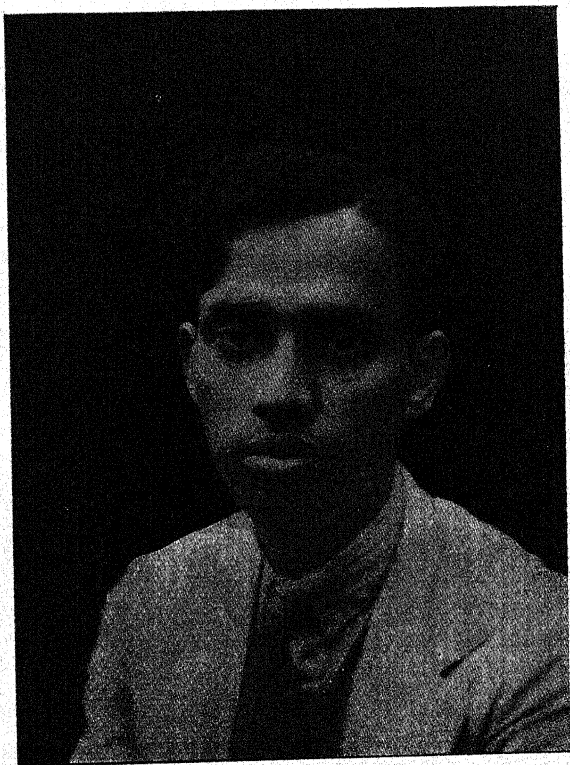
While in Madras for a short period after my return from the foreign countries, I wrote this book. I am so very glad that this book has run into the 3rd

edition within so short a time, and I hope, it will run into many more. It is a proof positive of the appreciation of my adventurous spirit by the public. I have allowed many alterations to occur in the present edition which, I hope, the reading public will much appreciate.

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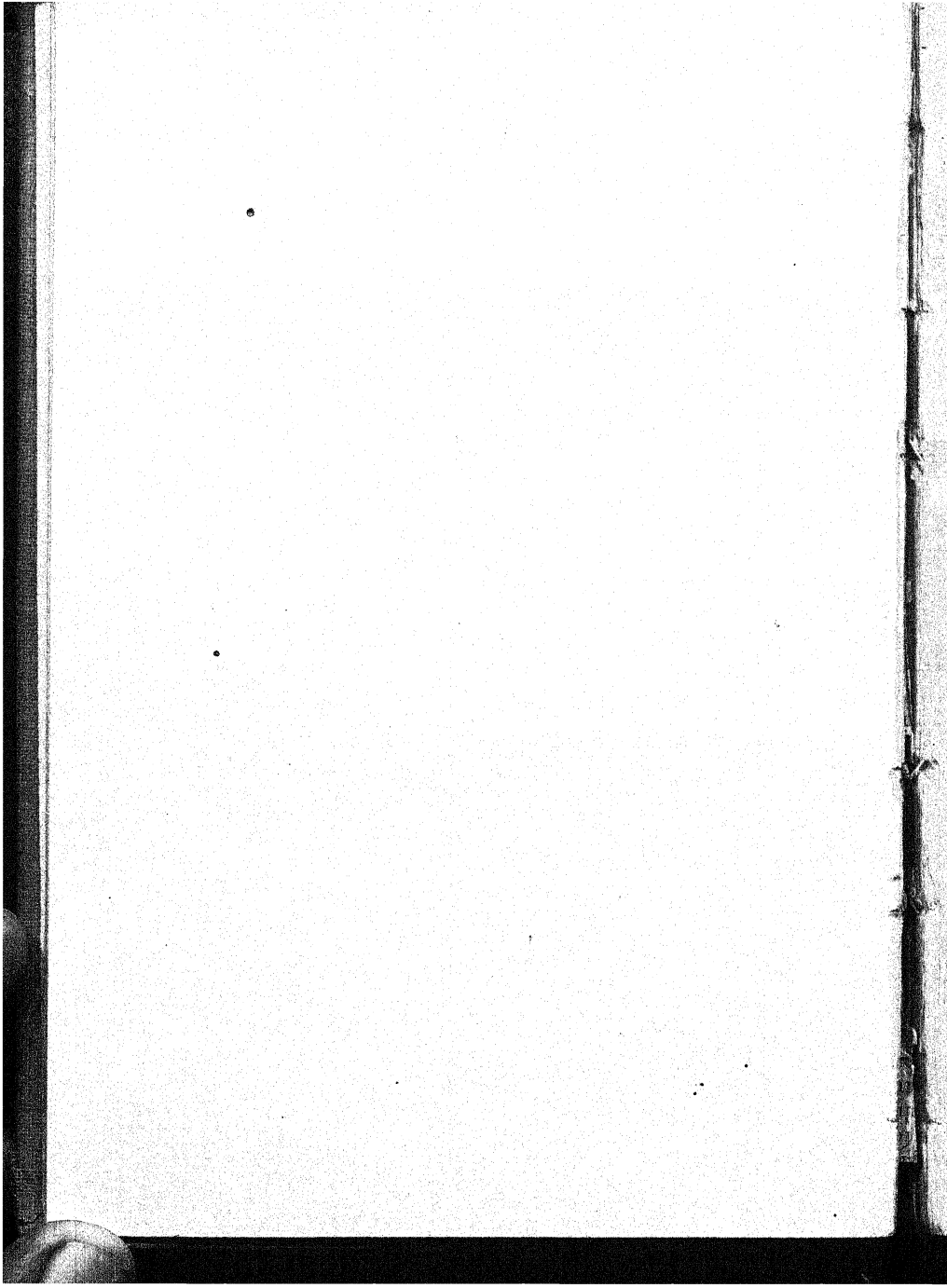




Author

Born

1912





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## INDIA

In December, 1933, while at Tinsukia ( Upper Assam ) on a short visit to see my ailing brother, I happened to go through several books on travels and adventures of some European youngmen. Their enterprising careers and thrilling adventures inspired me with a new hope and courage, and I began to feel an urge within me to do something equally educative and thrilling, but for the time being I was at pains to make out what I should do. Once I planned to climb up that unconquered Mount Everest, but I had to drop the idea at last, apprehending difficulties almost insurmountable to an Indian adventurer. After proper consideration I came to the decision to travel almost all the important countries of the world on foot. I thought that my experiences and impressions gathered thus from my contact with peoples of different colours and cultures might be useful to my countrymen. I pondered over the matter again and again for two or three days and took into consideration all sorts of difficulties that might come up in such an undertaking, but I became supremely convinced that I should undertake the tour even in face of the great pecuniary difficulty. I had only a paltry sum of thirty rupees at that time, but want of funds could not influence my decision even in the least. I firmly resolved

that I should either accomplish my object or die. I believed that the difficulties would be fading away before the firm determination of my mind. I spoke about it to my elder brother, but he took the wisest course of keeping silent about this matter. Really I owed him a great deal for his wise decision not to prevent me from undertaking such a tour involving risks at every step, but it does by no means mean that he approved my decision wholeheartedly. Except my elder brother no other creature of Tinsukia knew anything about my proposed undertaking. Thus deciding I approached a local tailor for a *khaki* suit. I bought some other articles of bare necessity, and after purchasing them I found only eleven rupees out of thirty left in my pocket to start with. A princely sum, indeed !

As I am not much of an orthodox Hindu, I had no difficulty to fix a day for my start. I fixed the 17th day of December without consulting any almanac for an auspicious moment. The previous day I informed some of my local friends about my proposed tour, and many of them came early next morning to see me off. After breakfast I lost no time to wear my new uniform. I took a small knapsack on my back and in it I had all my articles altogether weighing six seers or so. And then I approached my friends and my brother to say them good-bye and without much delay I started. I was going towards Bengal. For sometime after I had gone out of Tinsukia my mind was

occupied by my friends and relatives whom I had now left, who knew, for how long, and soon became overwhelmed with feelings for my near and dear ones. The firm determination of my mind was now gone and I sat down on the wayside. A good long time had passed away before I came to my ordinary mood for working and bade good-bye to all those feelings to continue my walk.

At night-fall I reached a small village and there I stopped for the night. I approached a poor villager and he welcomed me to his house, and thus I spent safely this the first night of my journey and I heartily thanked God for it. Early next morning I left the village and walked all day long, stopping at another village at sun-set. Thus I continued my journey, sometimes enjoying the hospitality of the villagers and sometimes without, across hills and plains, villages and towns. And after a few days I arrived at Half-Long, a lovely town lying in the midst of attractive natural scenery. The place is mountaineous. It is inhabited by tribesmen, but those half cultured people are fast becoming cultured. For this they owe a great deal to the native and foreign missionaries, but for whose benevolent efforts they would possibly have remained where they were.

Hardly a week had passed since my start before my patience was tried. After a day's halt at Half-Long I left early next morning. I was walking along the railway up and down the high hills—all covered with

thick forests and scattered localities at long distances. I was shivering from cold for want of proper winter clothes. At times I began to run just to warm myself and thus when I covered nearly ten miles from the town, I was taken aback by some healthy chaps of dark complexion who drew out their knives to silence me and to rob me of the little money I had in my pocket. My wristwatch too could not escape their notice. They rendered me absolutely penniless. I had not even a pice now to buy gram for. After their departure I could not move from the place where I stood spell-bound, seriously thinking as to what I should do, and actually a few drops of tears rolled down my cheeks. It did not, however, take me long to discover my weakness, and no longer did I give any place to it. I started and tried to forget what was past. Within a few hours I reached a railway station where I had stopped for a few days until I got some money from my brother to start with.

After a few days' walk along the railway across hills and rivers and forests, sometimes with food and sometimes without, I came to Badarpur and thence to Calcutta *Via* Comilla, Dacca, Goalundo and Ranaghat on the 1st day of February, 1934, covering a distance of nearly seven hundred miles. As the political atmosphere in the country was not exactly normal and as the Bengali youngmen in general were still regarded by the government as revolutionaries or their supporters, I felt considerable

pains to find shelter in many places. Hence I made up my mind, while on my way to Calcutta, to take some introductory letters from some men of importance, and accordingly one morning I went to the Science College to see our Acharya Sir P. C. Roy, but unhappily I was given to learn after an hour of patient waiting by a young student, probably his private secretary, that Sir Roy would not see me. And as regards the introductory letter I had to wait for the same disappointing reply. I was a bit depressed, though not wholly, at this. Next morning I tried another gentleman and this time Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee, a man of some political importance with whom I had been well familiar for a few years past, but here too I appealed to an unkind heart. For reasons best known to him and him alone he courteously refused to give me not only a general letter of introduction but also an ordinary introductory letter to a certain gentleman which I required. He did not rest contented by merely refusing to give me a letter. He also tried to induce me to give up my idea by impressing upon me the futility of this sort of tour. Frankly speaking, I was sorry not so much at our Acharya's reply as I was to see the attitude of Dr. Banerjee. Thus while I was discouraged by my known people, I was exceedingly happy to be welcomed by an unexpected quarter, I mean Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haque, now the chief minister of Bengal and the then Mayor of Calcutta. He appreciated me highly and

gladly gave me a letter of introduction. Later on, I met some other noted Bengalees, all of whom encouraged me by wishing me every success in my perilous task.

From Calcutta I proceeded towards Peshawar along the Grand Trunk Road through Behar, the U. P., Delhi and the Punjab, and on the way I had had many strange experiences.

It was summer when I was in Behar and the U. P. It was terribly hot after nine in the morning and therefore impossible for me to walk after nine or ten. And to walk at noon would almost mean to go to suffer from sun-stroke. Indeed, whenever I had to walk in the scorching sun, I used to drink beforehand ample water so as to escape from the attack of sun-stroke which causes many deaths in North India in summer. Generally I used to start at 4 A. M. and tried to halt at a certain village or town by 9 for the whole day with a view to mixing with the people of the place towards evening. And within those five hours I could walk a distance of twenty miles or a bit more at a stretch. Often I would come across funny people on the way. One morning, while on my way to Arrah, I met one such fellow who came to pick up acquaintance with me. He was returning home. Within a few minutes he got acquainted with me and so I could not refuse him when he invited me to stay with him for the day. Soon we reached his village and he said by pointing to a big house at a little



distance that his was that house. When we reached the door of his house, he asked me to wait a moment outside. I waited and waited for him, but in vain. Angry and disgusted at last I knocked at the door and called the fellow by his name, but my voice dashed and dashed against the wall only in vain.

After a brief period of stay in Behar I was in the United Province, travelling there in the villages. The villages of Behar and the U. P. are smaller than the Bengal villages and they lie at long distances. The mud houses in the villages lie huddled together. Very few houses are found with large compounds.

In one village on the way to Jhansi I had a novel experience. The railway station master of the place was good enough to cordially receive me when I approached him for shelter for the day. As there is no hotel to be found in the Indian villages and as it was next to impossible for me to reach a town in one day, I had always to approach the public for both food and bed neither of which I could carry.

After arranging for my bath and bed in the station building the station master left for his house. And I began to eagerly wait to be called to lunch. Minute by minute and hour by hour the whole day passed, but I was neither called for lunch nor could I see him again. Needless to say, I began to feel hungry more and more as the time passed on, but I could not find anything to eat that whole day and night. It

was a village, inhabited by a few poor, wretched people, with no school, no market, not even a shop.

In Fatehpur, a small district town between Allahabad and Cawnpore, I approached, one by one, five gentlemen, all happened to belong to my own province, for shelter only, because food in the town could be easily procured from restaurants, but unhappily I was refused everywhere. As I had not money enough for my stay everywhere in Dak Bungalows, I had to choose a place for quiet rest under the shade of a tree in the scorching sun of a summer mid-day. And thus I passed the rest of the day and night under the blue canopy of the sky. Indeed, I was neither a bit depressed nor I was unhappy at this. Such experiences if compiled together would surely make a large volume, but by this I don't mean to say that I got such experiences everywhere. To say the truth, in most of the places I was warmly received by persons both big and small, and it is their love and admiration which kept me always cheerful and which sustained me in trials and tribulations during my long journey.

Before reaching Jhansi from Cawnpore I stopped for a day at Chirgaon, a small but historical village lying some nineteen miles away from the district town, and here I was very happy to pick up acquaintance with Mr. Maithili Sharan Gupta, probably the greatest Hindi poet. In fact, I was his guest and had a delightful talk with him. He is a great lover of Bengali



literature and in his library there is a good collection of Bengali books. Really I was profoundly impressed with his simplicity and charming manners.

Next morning I arrived at Jhansi, and, sincerely speaking, I was exceedingly delighted to visit this town of Rani Lakshmi Bai, the greatest heroine of the first Indian revolution for freedom. As I stepped into the town, all that I had read of her appeared vividly in my mind. At once I bowed low, almost without my knowledge, to pay my respectful homage to the memory of one who kindled the desire for freedom in many a heart of her countrymen, and who has since been a great inspiration to all fighters for independence.

From Jhansi I went to Datia, a small native state, and from there to Sonagir, a small village lying closeby. It is the holiest place of pilgrimage of the Jains. Up and down a small hill, nearly three miles away from the village, there are about one hundred temples ; some of them are very, very old.

In this village I happened to be acquainted with a Sikh contractor. Though my period of stay in the village was hardly a day, our mere acquaintance grew to intimacy even within so short a period. In his house he introduced me to his wife who happened to be a Bengalee. She was an illiterate woman and hence she could neither read nor write. For long six or seven months after her marriage, she told me, they could not understand each other except by the langu-

age of signs and gestures, after which both were able to pick up certain words of each other's language. Really it was a terrible period for her. She could neither find one to talk with and to share her feelings nor could she read books and write to her family members in a far off Bengal village who had written her no letter within twelve years that had passed since her marriage. To hear her tale of woes I felt pity for her and was sincerely sorry for my inability to help her in any way under the circumstances. Needless to say, she was very glad to talk with me, a countryman of hers. Without the least hesitation she opened her heart and began to tell me all her tales of weal and woe which made me both happy and sorry. Frankly admitting, I am very sensitive and emotional, and it is why I can't help being moved when I see one in distress, whoever he may be. Who knows how many of our fellow-brothers and sisters have to live such an unhappy married life simply to respect the wishes of their guardians, so-called well-wishers !

The following morning I started for Gwalior. Between Antri and Gwalior lies a thick forest infested with wild animals. It is said to be a favourite forest of many a hunter. Here in this State of Gwalior shooting of peacocks, which are found in large numbers, is strictly prohibited by law as is the case with many other native states of Central India. However, before cock-crow I left the village and began to walk along the railway. There prevailed in the forest

complete stillness disturbed at times only by chirps and roars of some birds and beasts. The more I began to advance through the forest, the more I became afraid of wild animals. Hence I accelerated my steps to reach a small group of natives who were going ahead of me and whose voices were floating on to me. They were armed with rifles. Who knew then that I would be falling a prey to these people whom I took for simple unsophisticated villagers ? They talked with me nicely when I came to them, but after a few minutes they suddenly changed. They picked up a quarrel with me exactly as the wolf did with the lamb in the story of the Æsop's Fable. I was quite conscious of my utter helplessness, and hence I tried to avoid the quarrel at any cost, but in vain, because they were bent upon quarreling with me just to make a pretext out of it to rob me of the little money I had. In Gwalior State there is probably no such arms act as deprives the people of their right of possessing arms.

Without a penny in my pocket I reached the city, and luckily I met Mr. S. N. Dutta, a state-engineer, who kindly helped me in this distress of mine by asking me to stay under his roof. More happily, I found several prominent people to help me with money to get out of the difficulty.

Gwalior, a famous city, is not so neat and clean, but it has certain places well worth a visit. The fort is one of them. At present one portion of the fort is

occupied by the army while its other portion, where lies the palace of Raja Man Singh, is open to the public. Within the gate a small archeological museum is housed where three pictures of Rani Lakshmi Bai in male attire drew my notice. Not very far away from the fort is the zoological garden which is a nice place for stroll. The beautiful lights, buildings and temples in it attract every visitor. But of all places in the city the most important is the *Bag* that stands surrounded by all huge edifices with the lovely marble statue of the late Maharaja in the centre.

From Gwalior I went to Dholpur and thence to Agra, a distance of nearly forty miles, in one day. So long I had an idea that Agra could be compared only with a most beautiful city, neat and clean, but, oh, God ! I now saw quite a different picture. However I managed to pass the night with an intense desire in heart to see the Taj, often described as the dream in marble, the day following. Though the beauty of the Taj need hardly to be described, I must say with all frankness that I was not highly impressed with it, because it fell far short of my imaginary Taj which I had built up from books and pamphlets. There is no doubt, indeed, that it is still the best piece of architecture, truly described as the dream in marble. I have great doubts if the greatest of the present architects of the world can execute such an excellent work. Although the beauty of the Taj is decaying and signs are not wanting about it, it still remains the place of pilgrimage

of great architects and lovers of beauty all the world over.

In the famous Agra Fort there are several very small stones on the wall of a building on the Jumna in which is reflected the whole Taj, about a mile and half off the Fort. It is really marvellous.

Agra can truly boast of not only the Taj, the fort and the like, but also of the Dayalbag, new of its kind in the whole of India. It has been built up in an outskirt of Agra. It is inhabited by no people other than those of Radha Swami's faith who happen to be all vegetarians. Indeed, the people of other faiths are not allowed to settle there. And hence no canker of communalism disturbs the peace of the people, all of whom like to lead a peaceful happy life. Even petty quarrels are absent here. Every one is active and there is not a single man in this colony unemployed and unhappy. The colony is absolutely independent almost in every respect. For general education there are schools and a college both for boys and girls, and then there are technical and medical schools. Almost everything of one's requirements—from shoe to hat and pin to pen—is produced in this colony, and therefore economically it is self-supporting. Really it is the pride not only of Agra and Oudh but of India at large.

From Agra I went to Muttra and Brindavan, two holy places of the Hindus. I covered the distance in one morning. The journey was delightful. Never before I had seen a wild deer except in the zoos, and so I

was very delighted to see a number of deer, young and old, some with horns and some without, while on my way to Muttra. Out of joy I went stealthily to catch one young deer from his behind, but he was too alert to fall a victim. In many places on the way I enjoyed also the dance of wild peacocks with their wings spread.

From Muttra I proceeded to Mahrauli famous for Kautab Minar, a majestic tower, from the top of which both Delhi and the Jumna are distinctly visible. It is told that it was built by Prithwiraj, the Hindu emperor, for his daughter who would not eat her breakfast without seeing the sacred Jumna. This place contains several interesting things.

It was rainy season when I was travelling in this part of our country, but I would care little for the inclement weather while I was carrying out my programme, although I had neither a rain-coat nor an umbrella with me at that time. Strangest of all, I suffered from no headache even for a moment, although I had done not a little injustice to my health by walking hours together in the rain and sun and passing nights together in fields and forests.

It was the last day of July, 1934, when I arrived at New Delhi, but here in this city of our Rajabs and Maharajahs and the like aristocrats I had to feel pains to find shelter. Indeed, almost in every city I had to feel such difficulty for my accommodation. These town people seemed to me to be very cold in cordiality and hospitality while the villagers, the poor starving



people, impressed me everywhere by their cordiality and sense of hospitality. The village people are generally more kind and responsive to appeals than their brethren in the town who are never tired of talking about great subjects like culture and civilisation and world-brotherhood, so on and so forth, but how many of them cultivate what they always preach? Truth to say, the town people, whatever they may think about themselves, appear to be lifeless.

After reaching Delhi I went direct to Ramkrishna Asram. I had written them for my accommodation several days before my arrival, but how strange, I was refused shelter, of course, courteously. At last I met the secretary of the Bengalee Association who, however, received me on behalf of their Association.

New Delhi, the present capital of India, is a modern city, very neat and clean, while Old Delhi is quite the opposite; its streets and lanes are too dirty to be described and most of its buildings, built in old style, lie congested. Parks and gardens are wanting in the old city, but the localities, which have grown up outside the city-wall, present a good picture.

New Delhi can boast of several magnificent buildings like the palace of H. E. the Viceroy. The place which contains the Viceroy's palace, the Secretariat and the Assembly House presents a most beautiful view. In Old Delhi the place most worth visiting is the Fort which bears eloquent testimony to the luxuries of Shahjahan and to the skill of great

architects of that time expressed vividly in the *Dewani Khas* building in which works were executed on silver and gold. The marble dais, on which once rested the famous Peacock-throne, is still there. Really the Fort of Delhi gives us an idea of the by-gone splendour and aristocracy of our Mughal emperors.

After about a week's stay in Delhi I resumed my journey and reached Panipat, the famous battle-field, the day following. The battle-field is now a vast corn-field and a small town has grown up by it.

I continued my journey after the night's halt here and passing through several historical towns such as Karnal I came to Kurukshetra, a holy place of the Hindus. It is said to be the field of the battle described so beautifully in the Mahabharata and the Geeta, two sacred books of the Hindus. There are many interesting stories about the ponds and temples here. There is a place here called Jyotishwar where, it is said, Bhagawan Sri Krishna delivered his philosophical discourses, which are compiled in the Geeta, to Arjuna when he refused to fight against all his kinsmen in the field. The Siva temple is the most important of all. It is said that Sri Krishna, Arjuna and others worshipped Siva here on the eve of the battle. On the walls of the temple there are at present many beautiful paintings — all about the war. The Brahmma Kundu looks like a lake. The water of this pond is sacred to the Hindus, because they say that both the warring parties came to bathe in this



pond. The *Ban Ganga* is only three miles off this place. It is so named, because Arjuna, unable to find water anywhere, arrowed the earth for the same to quench the thirst of Vishwa Dev. There is one more lake called Dwaipayan Lake which sheltered Durjyodhan who wanted to keep himself hidden from view, but unable to stand the insulting words uttered by Bhima he came out at last angry and disgusted and fought the battle royal and died. These are but a very few of the interesting stories told about the temples and tanks of Kurukshetra. The entire Mahabharata centres round them.

After a day's rest here I started again and reached Ambala the same day. From there I went to Kalka, an important railway junction, at the foot of the Himalayas. It was the 17th August, 1934.

As I had an engagement that night at Kasauli, I continued my journey without stopping at Kalka enroute. It was 4 P. M. when I left the town. There are two ways leading to Kasauli from Kalka, one a motor-road and the other a bridle-path. The distance between the two towns by the motor-road is more than double, and hence I took the bridle-path. The distance by this way is about nine miles. Inexperienced as I was in mountaineering, I was wrong to estimate that it would take me only two hours or so to cover the distance. And it did not become evident to me until I actually began to climb. It was so tiring that I required rest after every ten or fifteen minutes' walk.

Thus I had covered only one third of the distance before sun-set. But by this time I became quite tired and could not progress as fast as before even though I wished. At dusk I met two men who were coming down to Kalka. They asked me why I was going to Kasauli by that path and especially at that time when there was every possibility of occurrence of a danger to my person or purse, but I cared little to pay heed to their counsels. By this time a thin darkness had already settled all around and it was becoming deeper and deeper with every moment. I had no torch, not even matches with me, because I would not smoke. So I now felt its want and without the least hesitation asked them for a match if, indeed, they had any. They gave me one and I thanked them heartily. After a moment we went our own ways. As I walked on, I began to feel thirsty more and more, but I had no water with me. At last I had to drink drain-water, not once or twice, but a number of times, without caring to see if it were clean, and thus saved myself from utter collapse due to thirst. A fear—fear of wild animals—was always haunting me. There was deep darkness all around me and then I was to walk up a steep mountain. I had to be overcautious in going up this way, because to slip from the path leftward meant a fall down the mountain to the depth of, say, five or six hundred feet, and to move a little rightward meant a dash against the mountain. Over and above, there was the fear of wild animals. Not

that I could dismiss the fear of animals from my mind, but what could I do except going on as fast as possible under the circumstances ?

About an hour had passed since I met those gentlemen, and within this period I had been able to cover another two miles or so. Then suddenly came to my sight a light about a hundred feet above me. It relieved me of my fear to some extent and I got fresh energy to walk more swiftly to reach the persons carrying the light. But once again I fell a victim. When I approached them to make acquaintance, they suddenly struck me at my ear, and it was enough for me to fall down unconscious. They took away my money, my wristwatch, even the camera. For a moment after I had come to senses I was at a loss to understand what had occurred to me, but soon I came to realise that I should wait there no longer, because I apprehended that a greater danger might befall me. So, I sprang to my feet, although I was very, very weak, and approached the nearby water-fall to wash my hands and face, and then after a little rest I continued my journey.

At mid-night I came to Kasauli penniless and naturally it troubled my mind for a moment. By this time I learnt the technique how and whom to approach for shelter. And so I went direct to the police-station, and happily enough, the officer-in-charge immediately took me in. I heaved a sigh of relief.

Kasauli, situated at an altitude of more than six

thousand feet above sea-level, looks very beautiful. Its houses are scattered over a large area up and down the mountain, and so its streets too run up and down. 'Monkey Point', the highest place of the town, is said to be three feet higher than Simla. It is where stands the famous hospital for anti-rabid treatment. It is said to be the oldest hospital of its kind in India.

It is a summer-resort favourite to many. Here one finds an opportunity to play with clouds. It is difficult to keep windows of the houses open because of clouds which enter and damp the articles. The scenery surrounding the town is simply marvellous. When one looks around from the town, he finds a series of small hills and between them vast pieces of white clouds settled.

After a brief stay here for two days I left for Simla, arriving there five days after. I put up in the Kali Bari which has arrangements for accommodation of visitors.

In Simla I had opportunities of meeting several prominent people, the most important of whom were H. H. the Maharaja of Sirmoor State in the Punjab and Sir N. N. Sircar, the Hon'ble Law-member of the India Government. They all appreciated me highly. The Hon'ble Sir N. N. Sircar impressed me very much. I have seldom found a man of his position and prominence so simple, sociable and sympathetic. Even the poorest of the people could see him without any difficulty. In this connection I recall my visit to the

house of late Sir Fazli Hussain, another Hon'ble member of H. E. the Viceroy's Executive Council. At the entrance of his house-compound I was stopped by the guard and so could not enter and send in my visiting card while I was most warmly received the very same day by H. H. the Maharaja of Sirmoor, a young-man of not more than probably twenty-four, but a man of broad outlook who has already given a good account of himself as an administrator. He has thrown open all the public temples to the untouchables and has done a good deal for the progress of his small state. His inspiring words still ring in my ears. He said when I parted, "Believe me, I shall pray for thy safe journey every morning and evening."

When at Ambala, I got a letter from H. H. the late Maharaja of Patiala, inviting me to see him at Chail, his summer capital. And accordingly I went to Chail from Simla, a distance of about twenty miles by the bridle-path. Needless to say, I was given a hearty welcome at Chail and had the honour of staying there as the guest of His Highness. I had had a very delightful interview with him which lasted more than half an hour, and this happy occasion will surely remain ever green in my mind. I was profoundly impressed by his cordiality, sincerity and simplicity. As I entered the room, he came a few steps forward to receive me in his breast and I almost lost myself in his affection. We then took our seats on two ordinary cane chairs side by side. Then he introduced

my humble self to his son-in-law and to the Crown-Prince, who is now the ruling prince, both of whom were called for the purpose. Both of them, even the Maharaja himself, were simply dressed, and the hall too wore nothing of splendour and grandeur that generally attends the ruling princes. We talked for a good long time, and all the while they showed great interest to hearing about my tour. At the close of our talk when I stood up to say them good-bye, the kind Maharaja embraced me again and wished me every success in my ambition, requesting me to see him again on the completion of my tour. Really I was charmed by his affectionate behaviour. Sincerely speaking, I valued his cordiality of behaviour more than anything else.

Next morning I was delighted most to receive a letter from His Highness himself along with Govt Promissory Notes for five hundred rupees and a film-camera worth rupees three hundred or so.

Chail is a lovely town at a height of more than six thousand feet. It is very neat and clean. Its climate too is very embracing and invigorating. It has a beautiful cricket-ground like which there is probably no other at such an altitude in the whole world. The entire head of a hill was blown off for the purpose. The most favourite place for my walk was a small hill, not very far away from the cricket-ground, where I came almost every evening to enjoy the lovely panorama of the hills and forests and the river.



Really, many an evening I sat motionless and still under the dark shade of the evening sky and became absorbed in the beauties of Nature. When the golden rays of the setting sun fell on the silvery waters of the far off Sutlej and on the idly floating clouds, I forgot myself completely in the beauty of the fast changing panorama.

A few couples of days I passed here very happily in the company of several countrymen of mine and these days I had lived an aristocrat's life. And then, one fine morning, I bade adieu to this beautiful Chail to leave for Amritsar, the holiest of the places of pilgrimage of the Sikhs. I arrived there after walking about two hundred miles along the Himalayan range.

It is the city where occurred the Zalianwalla Bag massacre in 1919 which was the prelude to a country-wide agitation, resulting in the Khilafat movement which happened to be the first non-violent freedom-movement of our country. It is famous also for the golden temple of the Sikhs which attracts visitors in large numbers from far and near.

From Amritsar I went to Lahore, famous for the Shalimar gardens, and thence to Peshawar, the homeland of our Pathan brethren, a martial race, in the north western frontier of India, guarded by high mountains.

As I had had some difficulties to feel for obtaining a passport for Afghanistan, I returned to Delhi and proceeded to Calcutta *via* Nagpur in the C. P. and Puri in Orissa. My journey along that way gave me much

trouble—enough to remember for a long time to come. There are only deserts and forests on the way. Villages occur at long distances. However, I managed to travel this way quite safely.

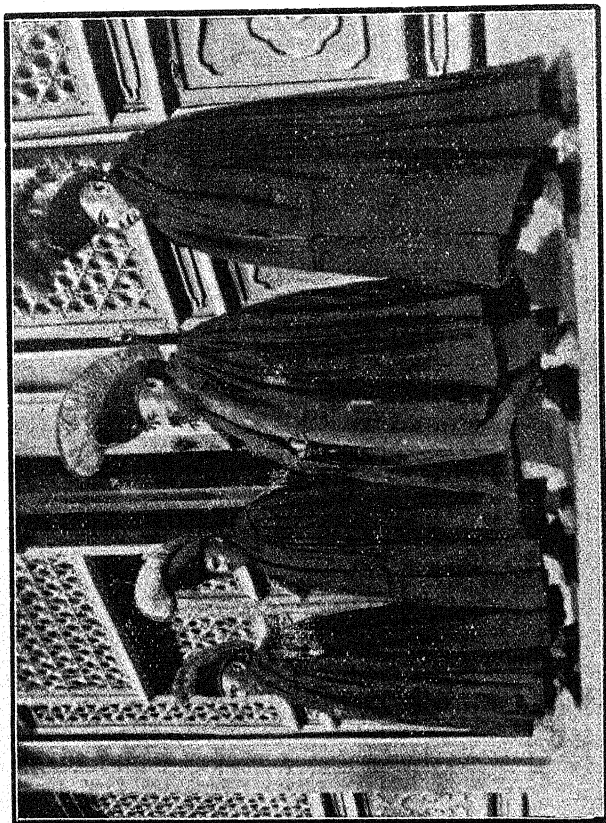
Nagpur as a city could not much appeal to me, and as regards the town of Puri I should better say nothing. But the sea-beach of Puri was as much an attraction to me as a chocolate to a boy.

Puri is a famous place of pilgrimage where Hindu devotees flock from all parts of the country to have a glimpse of their Lord Jagannath. But to speak for myself, I could not return to proper mood for seeing Jagannath after having a look at the huge figures of couples in the most indecent postures on the outer body of the temple. They are too prominent to escape the notice of even a child. The people having some senses cannot possibly go to see Jagannath with their youngers. I wonder why they are not demolished.

From Puri I came to Calcutta and here I got my passport. Thereafter I proceeded to Sita-kundu, a holy place of the Hindus, reaching there one fine morning.

Here also as in many other places I found not a single person to shelter me, but the reason why I was refused shelter here was altogether a different one; it was a political reason. The entire district of Chittagong had been under a heavy roller of repression for a few years past and the worst victims were the Hindus. And so the Hindu people of the district





Lama priests in prayer,  
Peking



would have to think twice before sheltering a stranger, especially a Hindu youngman who was generally looked upon as a revolutionary or a supporter of the terrorist movement by the government of the province. However, at last I got a place in the police station to stay.

Towards afternoon I set out to visit two famous Hindu temples on the hill about three miles off the town. The path running from the base of the hill to the top bifurcates on the way, one leading to the temple of Birupaksha and the other to the temple of Chandranath. The two temples stand on two different hill-tops. They are connected by a bridle-path. The Chandranath hill is bigger. After ascending a little I came to the place of bifurcation of the road and there I turned to left to go to the temple of Birupaksha first and from there hurried to the Chandranath temple, because the evening was fast approaching. The sun had just gone down the horizon. The last rays of the sun were still to be visible on the thin clouds, but soon they also were gone. At this time I was going down the scores of steps from the Chandranath temple. As I was going down and down, the darkness of the evening seemed to be thicker and thicker. So, I began to accelerate my steps, but as I turned round a sharp bend and walked down five steps or so, nearly two hundred steps below the temple, I became puzzled for a moment to see a big tiger—that most ferocious animal—on a step about nine feet below looking

forward. Immediately my blood went cold and a thrill ran through my body, but I lost no senses. Within a wink I jumped back, and before disappearing behind the bend when I looked back, there occurred an exchange of our looks. Almost in the same breath I reached the temple, but unfortunately its door was closed. Now I could not summon courage to go even by the other path which brought me there. Not that I had no fear in my mind to stay there, but what else could I do except seeking a place for safe shelter there? Unable to find a safe place there I climbed up a big tree near the temple. I passed that awful night wide awake amidst solemn stillness disturbed at times only by roars of some wild beasts.

The day following when the sun rose and the devotees began to pour in, I came down and started for the town. Needless to say, my absence caused the people of the police station great anxieties, and so they flocked round me as I reached the station. They heard my story with rapt attention and thanked God for having saved me from sure death. Then they began to narrate so many such stories and I began to hear them with interest and attention.

The same day I arrived at Chittagong and put up with Mr. Sailendra Nath Chatterjee, a relative of mine. In an outskirt of this town lies a pond many centuries old. There are many interesting stories about it and particularly the tortoises. It is said that Hazarat Seikh Sultan Baijid Bostome, a famous Muslim

saint of revered memory, cursed the ghosts, who were constantly disturbing him in his prayer here by this pond, to remain in it as tortoises. They are highly regarded by the Muslims who never allow anyone to kill them.

An old mosque stands on the hill beside the pond where was buried the saint. It was built by Nawab Nasarat Jang and Nawab Ghazi Shah in 817 A. D.

After a brief halt here for only two days I left for Akyab in Burma.

## BURMA

Akyab is a district and divisional town of Burma, about one hundred and twenty-five miles off Chittagong. And this distance I covered in five days only without any difficulty worth mentioning. With my first step into this town I came to realise that it was a foreign country. Not that I did not know that Burma was a province of British India, but I could not find anything in the Burmans and in all their things akin to ours. The difference between our appearance and dress, customs and manners and theirs is so striking that it at once arrested my notice. While we the Indians have pointed nose, they have flat ; while we wear dhuti or pajamas, they wear loongee ; while we have different kinds of pagrees for our head, they have a piece of silken cloth to wear on. And to speak about the females, the Burmans wear loongee while the Indians do not.

In our society man plays the leading role, but it is not the case with the Burman society. It is the woman who plays the leading part—a part generally played by man in all societies outside Burma. I know of no country where women play so important a role as in Burma. So, their social order too is a bit different from others'.

The Burman women are very smart and active

while their brothers and husbands are as idle as anything. They work hard, from house-hold works to earning for maintaining their family, while the male members spend their time in idle talks and gossips, thus rendering their wives and sisters practically no help to earn money. It is probably why the husbands in Burma have to accompany their wives. And it is probably for these reasons that women, and not men, inherit their ancestral properties.

The pattern of houses too is quite different from ours. They are constructed of wood on raised platforms.

Akyab is a small town, very beautiful. It is where I came in contact with many phoongys. It is really a delightful sight when phoongys set out in batches with begging bowls in their hands. Their religion enjoins them not to cook, and so they have to beg food. There are many other religious injunctions prohibiting them from doing certain things, such as, smoking, drinking and attending amusements, but people among them are not wanting who do in contravention of their religious injunctions.

Before I visited Burma, Malay and the East Indies, I had an impression, as many people of my province have, that loongee was the national dress of the Muslims. And so to me an orthodox Muslim was he who wore long beard and moustache, a Fez cap and a loongee ; but now I realise how wrong I was in maintaining such an impression. In fact, costumes have

nothing to do with any religion. It stands scrutiny of facts. Loongee or Sarong is the national costume of the Malayans and the Burmans. Both men and women wear sarong in Malay as in Burma. They took their national costume wherever they had settled and it is why we find that the people of the East Indies, mostly Malayans, wear loongee, though they profess different religious faiths. Now I surmise that the people of Eastern Bengal and Madras Presidency, who have an unbroken contact for a long, long time past with these people, have taken this costume from them. It is established when we visit other parts of India where loongee is conspicuous by its absence. And as regards beard and moustache, we find that the Muslims in Bengal keep them while the Punjabees and others do not. Even the Arabs are clean shaved. And about the Fez cap, well, it is not the religious cap of the Muslims. It is established when we see that the people of Arabia, where the great Prophet Mohammed lived, preached his philosophy and died, use only a piece of cloth with a rope-like thing called *ogal* over it round the head instead of that cap. Likewise the Hindus, the Christians or the Buddhists—none of them wears one kind of costume. We now find that costumes are so adopted as to suit the taste of the people and the climate. Costume changes everywhere with taste and outlook of the people.

It is a noted sea-port on the Bay of Bengal. The most lovely place in this town is where the river has



fallen into the Bay. It offers a lovely view particularly when the sun rises and sets or in a moon-lit night. Some small islands, an endless expanse of blue water and roaring waves dashing against the rocks along the shore—all together form a charming background. It is where I used to come every evening to get absorbed in contemplation of the beauties of Nature.

After a few days' rest in this town I left for Rangoon, arriving there on the 11th May, 1935, after completing a journey of about 9000 miles on foot in some 500 days since my start. From Akyab to Basin there is no road save and except a bridle-path which runs up and down the Arakan hills through dense forests, and it is along this way that I ventured to go at the risk of my life. Fortunately, I met on the way some Chittagonian fellows whose also were the same destination as mine. I heaved a sigh of relief to see them. We used to walk along this way in constant fear of snakes and wild beasts, particularly elephants. One day we met a tusker who stood on our way. Unable to devise any means to scare away the animal we at last collected some dry woods to set fire to, and this device had our desired effect.

In Rangoon I got an amiable gentleman, Mr. K. L. Dutta, a superintendent of the A. G. Office, as my host. He had his house at Kalabasti.

Rangoon is a big city with a population of more than three hundred thousand. It looks beautiful, very

neat and clean. Roads are straight and lanes are absent. The lake, the parks and gardens and the Shwe-Dagon Pagoda, that world-famous golden pagoda,—all together make this city most attractive.

It is where I changed my idea about touring on foot and took to cycling. Indeed, I had no knowledge of cycling when I finally decided to travel on a bicycle. It is after deciding that I purchased an ordinary bicycle, learnt cycling within a very few days and started from Rangoon towards the north.

The first day I stopped at Pegu, a small town some fifty miles off the capital. I stayed there with Mr. R. C. Chakravorty, an amiable gentleman and a member of the local Bar. It is a town noted for an image of 'Lying Buddha', said to be the biggest of its kind in the whole world. It is hundred feet and ten long and forty-six feet wide at shoulders. It lies under a shed.

Next morning I left for Meiktila, arriving there after two days. I put up here in the Dak Bungalow. That night I had an undisturbed sleep all throughout, and early morning when I got up to start on my journey, I found, to my surprise, my suit-case broken outside and money and the camera missing. Suffice it to say, it would seriously interrupt my programme, had I not found some generous people to help me.

Meiktila is a small town, very beautiful because of its lake and hills on which it stands. It is where I had the pleasure of attending for the first time the Burmese

dance. It is artistic and simply pleasing. The cane-ball game, the Burmese national game, too interested me greatly. It is a game played by heel, not by foot.

After two days at Meiktila I proceeded to Mandalay, the old capital of Burma, reaching there three days hence, and these days I passed in the wayside villages. It is mainly an agricultural country as ours is, and its principal crop is paddy. Economically, the Burmans are much better off than their Indian brethren and starvation is a thing quite foreign to them.

Most of the people are Buddhists, and it is why every village and town is dotted with pagodas (Buddhist temples). There are innumerable phoongys, easily distinguishable from their yellow clothes, who come to sight everywhere. They live on public charity. They wield a great influence over the society. One need not go far to seek how the people of Burma are fast progressing in the sphere of education. The phoongys have made it a part of their duty to impart education free to the public and they do it in their changs (Asrams).

The Burmans do not generally take their meals after sun-set. They have no scruple in taking meat or fish or even beef, though they are Buddhists pledged to non-violence. They are very clean. Almost in every house an iron is kept for ironing clothes. The ladies are very smart, and when they dress their long hair artistically and come out in clothes, gorgeous and colourful, with cigars in their mouths, they look very beautiful.

While even in the remotest towns of northern Burma, I could hardly distinguish them from Chinese towns because of Chinese population. Everywhere in Burma the Chinese and the Indians have penetrated and settled in large numbers. The Indians had almost monopolised so long the services while the Chinese are still predominant in the commercial field. Indeed, a great number of Indians too are engaged in business and they are doing well. Many of our countrymen are found even as cultivators in the far off villages.

Mandalay, though not a big city, spreads over a large area. Its streets are straight and very wide—so wide that the question of metalling the whole street or watering is beyond the financial capacity of its Municipality.

It was founded in 1856 by King Mindon, father of King Theebow, who shifted his capital from Amarapura lying only nine miles off. In the streets of this city one has to experience many dust-storms.

It is where lies a beautiful palace of the past emperors of Burma. The palace is surrounded by high walls with a big moat, full of water, around. The palace, though constructed entirely of wood, contains many beautiful architectural designs on the doors, walls and the roof which show the mastery of craftsmanship attained by the Burmans of those days. The huge audience-hall has in it the Lion-throne called Sinhasana and several other thrones named as Bee-couch, Deet, Lily and

Peacock. All these thrones which once were set with precious stones and jewels give us a faint idea of the by-gone splendour and pomp that attended the Burmese kings.

As I moved on in this palace, I felt overwhelmed with feelings and with difficulty I checked my tears, because the glory that once was Burmans' has now passed away.

Behind the palace stands a small hill with a few white pagodas on its crest. It is crowded from morning to night with devotees of different nationalities who come in hundreds to visit the pagodas. It lends to the beauty of the city. In this city lies also the 'Arakan Pagoda', so named because it was formerly at Arakan. It is said to have been brought here by the Crown Prince during the reign of Shwe-nan, the king of Amarapura.

After three days at Mandalay I started for Maymyo, the summer capital of Burma, situated on a small plateau. The road was of asphalt, excellent in condition. At a distance of about sixteen miles from Mandalay lies the hill and up this hill the road runs. It was with difficulty that I began to make progress up the hill, sometimes cycling and sometimes on foot, and thus when I had covered about half the distance, I felt too tired to proceed any further without rest, and I sat on a piece of rock. On my left there was a depth of a few hundred feet while on my right lay the body of the hill covered with jungles affording shelter to animals.

I was so fatigued that soon I fell adozing, but I suddenly started up a while after at some rude voices and found four chaps brandishing their knives. Not a word I could utter. Once I tried, but soon calmed down at their threat. Like a helpless boy I simply witnessed what they did. They broke the suitcase and took away my money and some valuables, leaving me penniless. Though I became accustomed to such conditions by this time, I could not but seriously think as to how I should now raise funds barely necessary for going to China.

Towards evening I reached Maymyo and put up with Mr. S. C. Mazumdar, a sweet countryman of mine, to whom I was introduced by one of my acquaintances in Rangoon.

It is a small town, very neat and clean, situated about three thousand and five hundred feet above sea-level. It has an invigorating climate which much appeals to the visitors. It has a lovely lake by its side which adds to the natural beauty of the place. This lake supplies drinking water.

From this town run two roads—one to the Siamese border and the other to Namkhan, the frontier of Burma, beyond which lies China. As this road was not very safe for journey, I could not proceed to China by this way, though I had an ardent desire. So, I made up my mind to go to China through the frontier of Bhamo. And accordingly I left the town after two days, reaching Bhamo a few days later by way of Sagaing

and Shwebo. I disposed of my cycle there and took a Chinese boy as my guide and proceeded to Tengyueh, the frontier town of China at a distance of some one hundred and thirty miles. It is along this route that the Chinese come in thousands to trade in Burma during summer.

It was raining heavily day and night when I reached Bhamo. Despite this inclemency of weather I started on my journey with my guide against the advice of my friends and well-wishers. We walked on up and down the high mountains along the bridle-path always in fear. We got some rest-houses on the way. After a few days we came before a rivulet, full to its brim because of heavy downpours. There was no bridge over it, neither was there any boat to take me over to the other side. We waited there two days for the water to subside, but in vain. The cruel river refused me passage. And so I was forced back to Bhamo, where I got back my cycle, and thence to Rangoon from where I took a boat for Penang, a noted sea-port.



# STRAITS-SETTLEMENTS & MALAY STATES

It was the 20th June, the day of my landing at Penang. The boat anchored in the mid-sea and I took a country-boat to go ashore. The sea here is very narrow.

Though a big port, Penang has only two wharves, and so most of the ships have to anchor in the mid-sea. For the conveyance of the passengers most of the steam-ship companies have their own steam-launches.

The day of my arrival while I was cycling past a big restaurant, I met one Mr. J. Samuel, an Indian Christian. The amiable old man immediately invited me to his house to stay, and thus I was relieved of my worry. I passed my time in the pleasant company of the members of his family who took me as their own.

Penang is a British Crown Colony governed by the Governor of the Straits-Settlements. The area of this island is some forty-five square miles. It is one of the beauty-spots in the East. The city is very neat and clean. It looks lovely because of its hill and sea. The hill is about two thousand and five hundred feet high, and almost up to its peak trams run with the help of a rope which helps two cars to run simul-



taneously up and down. On the top of the hill lies the Governor's palace and beside it a few buildings housing hotels and Government offices around a children's park. From this place the city looks very, very small, and the sea appears to be not much bigger than a canal.

It has a beach, simply marvellous, which lends to the charm of the city. Its roads are broad and clean. For communication there are trolley-buses, buses and trams. Rickshaws too are not wanting. They are pulled mostly by the Chinese. The city is supplied drinking water from the rain-water reserved in the reservoirs on the hill.

And for adding to the pleasures of the citizens there are cinemas and fun and frolic.

Penang appears to be an Indian city from its population of whom more than half a lac are Indians, mostly Madrasedes, but funny is that the Indians other than the Madrasedes are known to the local people as Bengalees. This shows that there was once a great influence of the Bengalees here and it is supported by the old Kali temple on a gift-land, still free of all municipal taxes.

In an outskirt of the city stands a Chinese temple called "Snake-temple". Innumerable snakes, big and small, are to be found therein. They are tame and do not bite any one when the visitors enter the temple. They are found all around—on the walls and ceiling, pictures and flower-vases. They never come out of

as with  
scamp

the temple except on a few particular days of the year. They are worshipped by the Chinese priests twice a day.

After three days at Penang I left for Singapore. I crossed the sea by a *sampan* (small country-boat) and then began my journey on a cycle. On the second day of my start I arrived at Epoh, passing through many rubber-estates. Rubber-trees grow in abundance in Malay and it is the main source of income of the people and the State because of its brisk demand all over the world. The name and the prosperity of Malay are inseparably connected with its rubber cultivation as the prosperity of Bengal is mainly connected with its jute. Rubber is prepared of white milk gathered by cutting the skin of the trees as the palm or date juice is tapped.

Epoh, though a small town, looks picturesque because of small hills all around. Here too there are many Indians.

The day following I reached Kuala-Lumpur, the most important of the towns in the Malay States, and from there I proceeded to Singapore, reaching there on the 27th June. I stayed in a Chinese hotel. Chinese hotels are good places for stay ; charges are moderate. They are found in large numbers everywhere in the Far East.

Singapore, Malacca, Dindings, Wellesly and Penang—these are five British Crown Colonies. They lie along the coast. Besides these Crown Colonies there

are two kinds of states in Malay, viz, 'Federated States' and 'Non-federated States.'

'Federated States' are Perak, Selangor, Negrisembilan and Pahang. Each is governed by a Sultan, but in affairs external he can do little independent of the British Resident. Kedah, Kelantan, Trengganu, Perlis and Johore are all Non-federated States ruled by the Sultans, but they too like their brother-princes can very little exercise their influence in foreign affairs. They are advised by the British advisers.

The Malaysans are short in stature and dark in complexion. They have flat nose and face of oval shape like the Burmans'. Sarong (Loongee) is their national costume and rice is their staple food. Their process of preparing food is somewhat like that of the Madrasees. Economically, they are much better off than the people of India.

Though Muslims the Malaysans are by religion, the ladies do not wear veils and likewise in many others they do not do according to the religious injunctions. With the advent of European education in Malay their age-long system of marriage is fast disappearing yielding place to love-marriage.

Education has not much spread in Malay, but of late the people have begun to take interest in education. Better late than never. They had so long neglected English education, but they do it no more. One of the reasons of their negligence appears to be the dearth of pioneers of western education amongst

them, and it is also because ignorance of English did not stand in the way of their earning. Now, with the change of time and of economic condition their outlook also has undergone a change. Once they came under the influence of the Indian culture and civilisation. They were a people of adventurous spirit, and it is why we find them settled in the distant islands in the Pacific, namely, Sumatra, Java, Bali, Borneo, Celebes, Philippine, where they carried the Indian culture. Almost all civilised people of those islands are Malayans; the natives of the soils are still in the primitive stage of civilisation, living far, far away from the civilised localities.

The Indians and the Chinese, taken together, far outnumber the Malayans in their own soil. When in Malay, I could hardly feel that I was travelling in a foreign country. The Malayans have been pushed to the background by the Indians and the Chinese almost in every respect, but still they seem to be contented with their present lot.

Singapore is a lovely city. Its streets are kept very clean—so clean that hardly a blade of grass comes to notice. It is a noted sea-port too. It is the meeting place of all ships plying between the Far East and the West. It looks like a picture because of its small hills and sea which lend to the beauty of the city. Its lovely beach, amusement-parks and gardens simply charm the visitors.

Strategically, it is an important place. In view of

the growing Japanese menace and of the ever present far eastern problems which are becoming acute day by day it will have to play an important role in near future. Indeed, the occupation of China by Japan will rob it much of its importance.

One morning I approached Mr. Bose, a professor in the Medical College, indeed, out of a strong desire to talk with a fellow-countryman of mine, but to my regret I found that he was not so keen to talk—a sort of behaviour I did not really expect from any man of some culture.

Out of a population of about three lacs in the city the Indians alone number about half a lac. The Chinese are the majority. They are a well-to-do people. They have much advanced in education and in other spheres of life. The girls do no longer keep short their feet, once the pride of the Chinese maidens. They bob their hair. They look clean and smart.

# CHINA

As it was very difficult to travel to China by way of Siam and Indo-China owing to heavy down-pours, I decided this time to avail of the opportunity of a sea-voyage and accordingly booked a deck-passage for Hongkong.

It was the 13th June, the day of my sailing from Singapore by the S. S. Takada of the B. I. S. N. Company. The deck was unclean. Besides it was overcrowded. I was very sorry to notice the apathy of the authorities of the company in regard to the comforts of the deck passengers. The deck was packed almost to suffocation, and then there were so many inconveniences which obliged me to make a complaint, but the authorities paid little heed to it.

About a dozen Indian soldiers boarded the ship at Singapore for guarding it against piracy by the Chinese and they went up to Hongkong. Indeed, almost every ship seeks the services of the soldiers in this regard. Really it was very interesting to hear so many kinds of thrilling tales connected with sea-piracy.

While on board, I was happy to make acquaintance with the electrician and the doctor, both of whom happened to be Bengalees, and it made me feel no monotony of the journey.



The 5th July was a day of my great joy. In the early hours of the morning we reached the waters of Hongkong. The marvellous scenery of Hongkong, particularly at night when come to sight nothing but multitudes of electric lights all over the hill, from crest to foot, looking like stars on the blue sky, simply charmed me. It appears to be an earthly paradise.

At cock-crow, in the twilight of the morning, our boat weighed anchor and began to move towards the harbour. A small launch came to help it to reach the wharf. By this time the passport officers, who came to our ship by a launch, had finished their business, and the passengers were allowed to land. It is Kowloon where the boats stop. It lies on the opposite shore of Hongkong. Hongkong is an island. *British Hong Kong*

From the ship I went direct to the ferry-station and got into a small ferry-steamer. Setting my foot on Hongkong I realised for the first time that I was really a stranger in this unknown land. Neither did I know anything of this city or its citizens nor did I know their language. However, I moved on from the station, and while cycling along a principal street I met an Indian traffic-police on duty, and it relieved me to some extent. I approached him and he furnished me with names and addresses of some hotels. There was a hotel not very far off. I went there, but the manager scornfully turned his face to see me, an Indian, and refused to accommodate me. Having received such a treatment I left to approach another



hotel, but there too I met no better treatment. I came to learn later on that there were many Chinese hotels in Hongkong whereinto the Indians were not admitted merely because of their political subjugation. It put me to a difficulty. I decided, however, at last to approach Dr. Dev, the assistant malariologist of the Hongkong Government, a countryman of mine, but it is a regret that he too showed me not even common courtesy. Depressed and disheartened when I was cycling along Gloucester Road, a big signboard of a hotel, probably the biggest hotel in Hongkong, caught my sight and I got in. I was received here with courtesy and was accommodated on the third floor.

The same day I had a very interesting experience in the hotel. After about an hour of my arrival I asked a waitress to bring a small bottle of oil from their stationery-stall downstairs, but what she brought? First a bottle of wine and then a jug of water. I burst into a laugh. This over, I asked a colleague of hers to show me the water-closet, but she was wiser than her friend! She took me first to the dining-hall, then to their office and then to the bath-room. Angry and disgusted though I became at this, I could not but laugh.

While strolling in the evening along Gloucester Road, I was amused to notice several girls at the door of a restaurant in a peculiar but gorgeous dress. The sleeves of the costume were too loose—probably more than a foot and half wide. Each had somewhat like

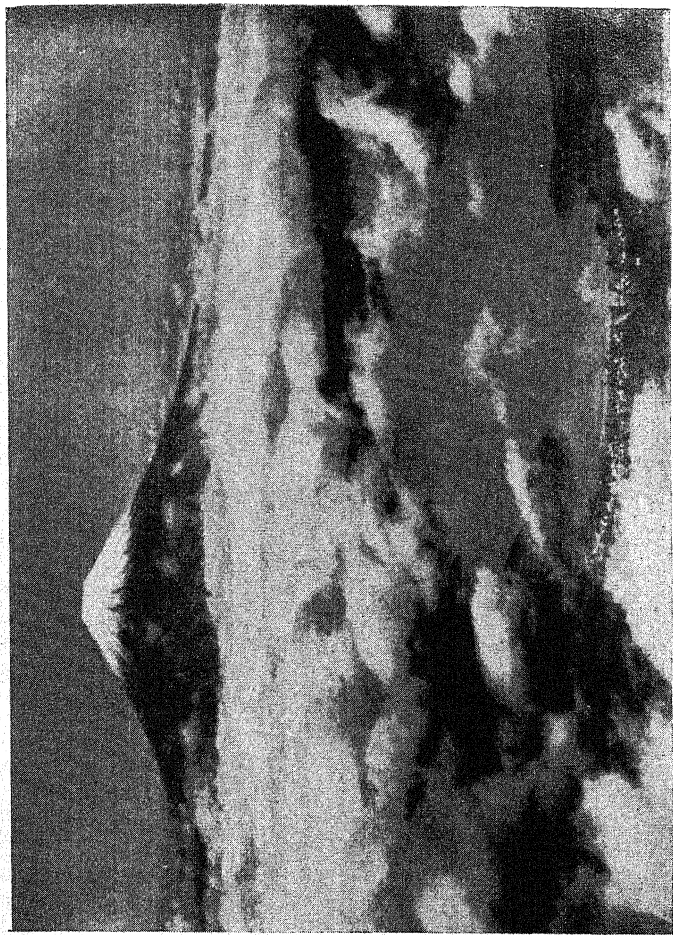
a bandage of silk cloth round her body just below breasts, of course over the costume. They wore wooden sandals with high heels. They dressed their long hair attractively, and then powder was noticeable on their faces. The girls looked healthy. Never before in my life I had seen girls in such a costume, and so I thought that they had dressed themselves in that fashion probably to attract the customers. And when I told my friends about them, they laughed and gave me to learn that they were Japanese in their national costume.

Next morning I met one Mr. Sarma, another countryman of mine, but he was not like his friend, Dr. Deb. He was exceedingly happy to see me. I was profoundly impressed with his sense of courtesy and hospitality. He did not allow me to stay anywhere else. I passed a few days in his sweet company. He was working in the Police department.

We were living in a building facing the sea, and from there we could enjoy the lovely panorama of the hill and sea. In this part of the city, I mean the Gloucester Road which runs along the shore, many of the boat-people used to live. And so they were always before our eyes. It helped me a great deal to have a peep into their daily life. The people are called 'Tanka' which means 'egg-people'. Why they are called by such a name and exactly when and wherefrom they came to take to boat-life are questions difficult even for the historians to answer. They

live in boats of a peculiar type. It is called 'junk', and by these junks they move across the seas and rivers. They are very, very daring. They possess no home and land. Fishing and transportation of goods are the meanses for their subsistence. They lack education and are despised in the society. In a word, they are the pariah of China. They are light dark in complexion and short in stature. Their number is estimated at one million in China.

Hongkong is a big, prosperous city. It has a population of cosmopolitan character. There are several thousand Indians, but most of them are soldiers under the British Command. There is a *Gurudwara* (Sikh temple) here where one can live free until he finds an employment. Our Punjabee brethren, wherever they go, even if they are a few in number, establish a temple which becomes a place of pilgrimage once a week, and that opportunity is utilised both for religious and unreligious purposes. Among the Indians the most enterprising people are the Punjabees and the Sindhees who are found in large numbers over a good portion of the world. Everywhere the Sindhees work as good merchants and enhance the prestige of India in this regard, but as regards the occupations of most of our Punjabee brethren, the less said, the better. In some countries they serve as British police and soldiers and in most others they work as menials, for which India has a bad name in the world. Indeed, of all Indians abroad the Sindhees



Snow-peaked Mount Fuzi and lake Ashi, Japan. Mount Fuzi is considered to be the most beautiful in the world.



and the Punjabees are the most hospitable people.

Hongkong is the loveliest of islands, lying close to the main land of China. It is a picturesque city in every sense. It abounds in cinemas, theatres, dancing-halls, cabarets and in so many other amusement-halls which make the night-life of the citizens pleasant. All its streets run much up and down, because the city spreads over the hill. It is only along the lower part of the hill that trams and trolley-buses run. There are rickshaws too. But for going up the hill one can make use of a kind of chair generally carried by four persons on their shoulders. It costs much. The tram here is two-storied.

Hongkong-hill is about fourteen hundred feet high. The summit of this hill can be reached by what is called rope-way tram. It is so named, because there is a strong rope which helps two cars to run simultaneously up and down. When one stops, the other automatically stops. From the peak-station one has to walk about two hundred feet to reach the summit where stands a wireless post, a few feet up the Governor's palace. This part of the hill is inhabited by Europeans only; no Asiatic, with the only exception of one Chinese who is said to have purchased the favour of the British at the cost of their national honour, is permitted to live there. On the summit one is attracted by a lovely sight especially in the evening.

This island has great strategic importance and its

government realise it. A strong army and a navy are there to protect it against any aggression, and they are practically the watch and wards of the British interests in the Far East. But still it is doubtful if they are so strong as to stand the onslaught of a first class military power.

After a brief stay with Mr. Deb I bade him good-bye to proceed to Canton. It was the 9th July. I stopped at Kowlon for a few minutes.

Kowlon is a small town under the administrative control of the Governor of Hongkong, the British Crown Colony. It was not a town when it was taken on lease for one hundred years by the British. It is now the headquarters of the army and the navy of the Crown Colony.

Canton is about one hundred miles from Hongkong and this distance I covered the same day, reaching there towards the evening. In fact, I had to feel a lot of trouble in the villages mainly due to my ignorance of Chinese. And then the road was not so good.

Canton is a city most flourishing and biggest in South China ; its population is about two million. The Chinese name of the city is Kwang-Chan-Fu or Sheng-Cheng. It lies on the Canton River.

It is an old city dating as far back as the eighth century when it was known as Yang-Cheng ( city of rams ). It has many historical things well worth a visit. Commercially and industrially it plays an important part in China.



It is a place of inspiration to the Chinese, because it is where germinated seeds of the revolution, it is wherefrom late Dr. San Yat Sen, that inspiring personality of China, led expeditions against the mighty forces of Imperialism to success. It is the most important centre of education in all South China. The Cantonese, I mean the people of South China, are more advanced not only in education and political outlook but also in matters social than their brethren in other parts.

After three days in Canton I left for Hokow, a town in the district of Samsui. On the way I fell a victim again, and this time in China, to robbery. The road was as bad as possible. It became both muddy and slippery due to rains, and so it was all the more difficult to proceed on. I went on, however, sometimes walking and sometimes cycling. Fatigued and tired I reached a vast field and chose a place for repose under a big shady tree. All its round could be sighted only a vast sheet of paddy-fields. The green plants seemed to be dancing with the tune of breeze. It was a lovely surrounding indeed! I lay down there and couldn't know exactly when I fell asleep. Had I known that it would bring me not relief, but worries instead! When I awoke, I was bewildered to see my cycle and the suit-case missing. I went about to look for them and after a long search found at some distance my suit-case broken, contents scattered and cash missing therefrom. Fortunately the book of travellers' cheques was

left behind along with other papers, and, needless to say, it relieved me of my worries to a great extent. These my unknown foreign friends decamped with only a few Chinese dollars, my film-camera and the cycle. I picked up those things into the box and started without further delay, arriving at Hokay towards evening. After reaching the town I went first to the police station to report the matter, but could not get it recorded simply because of my ignorance of Chinese. I came out then to look for a hotel, and while I was walking aimlessly, casting glances over the buildings right and left, I met a young Chinese, smartly dressed, who seemed to be keen to make acquaintance with me. On the spot he asked me thousand and one questions, and when he learnt that I was a tourist, out to travel the world merely on a bicycle, he was dam glad. He could speak English quite fluently. With his help, however, I found out a hotel for my stay.

The attractive feature of this town is the boat-people who live in boats in tens of thousands just beside the land-town. A water-town has grown up with those people, and, in fact, in point of population, and commercially too, the floating town is bigger than the land-town. Two ends of the Chinese junks in which they live are not pointed, and their process of rowing too is quite novel.

After two days' complete rest here I left for Hangchow in Central China. It is a long way off

and this journey took me fifteen days. Everything was not smooth sailing on the way. And during this journey I had many lessons to learn. Most of the days I had to spend in the wayside villages. In two places only I was treated hospitably by the people while in the rest I had to pass my nights either outside the doors of houses or under the shady trees. In all these places I approached either police stations or individuals in their absence, but most of them refused to shelter me, often remarking that they were not caravanserais. All these days I had to suffer great privations, but, thank Heaven, I got not even a mild attack of headache. In all troubles during my journey, frankly to speak, I felt the presence of a Superpower, but still, the people might be amused to learn, I do not believe in God. The more I am growing aged, the more I am losing faith in His existence. But this does not mean that I do not respect the believers in God. Maybe, it sounds self-contradicting.

The climate of this country greatly varies, as in India, from place to place. Generally it has two seasons—summer and winter. South China suffers from summer from April to September while the North suffers from May to August. In summer mid-days it is an ordeal to walk in the north because of hot winds blowing from the desert of Gobi. North China suffers from drought while rains are frequent in other parts. The bitterness of winter proves

too much to the people of China who cannot live without fire-stoves in their houses. It pinches upto one's marrowbone. So cold it is that rivers and seas become frozen, not to speak of ordinary water. The temperature in the north comes down to 10° or 12° f., but the severity of winter is felt much less in the south.

I reached Hangchow on the 28th July and put up in the Y. M. C. A., an ideal place for stay. I became fond of Y. M. C. A., because it is where can be found a cultured society to mix with, and then it is neat and clean. Charges are moderate.

I was longing for a bath, and so after a little rest, the same day of my arrival, I went for it. There were several taps in the bath-room and I engaged one. Then came in two youngmen, put off all their clothes and took their places by me. I found no delicacy in their manners. I was a bit astonished to notice it. Next moment two more came in and they too began to take their bath in the same manner. Now I understood that the Chinese saw no indecency in it. Quite so.

Hangchow is a big city ; the population is about half a million. It is purely a Chinese city affected very little by the Western civilisation. Except a few all its houses are small, built of tiles and mud. The roads are unmetalled and very dirty. It is the terminus of the Shanghai-Hangchow railway. There is a regular bus service too between this city and Shanghai and Nanking.

Hangchow is a city lying in a lovely surrounding. To the natives it is the 'Paradise of China'. It is so considered probably because of its lake, one of the most beautiful lakes in the world. It stands surrounded by hills. In its midst there are several artificial islands with gardens and floating restaurants, and a bridge connects some of them with the main land. They lend charm and beauty to the lake. Many boats are there to ply with visitors round the islands, and these joy-rides are highly enjoyable, particularly in the evening. The Imperial island, where once stood the palaces of the royal dynasties which have now crumbled down to pieces, the island of three pools and the pavilion in the lake's heart—all together go to form a fairy land in a moon-lit night.

On a hill along the bank stands a Buddhist temple called 'Needle Pagoda' dating back to the great building period of the Wu Yueh princes. There is another called 'Thunder Peak Pagoda' built by a concubine of Chien Hung-shu, a prince, in about 975 A. D. In a cave here lies a Buddhist shrine. It was excavated in about 1260 A. D. The monastery of Ling Yin houses an image of Buddha. It is one of the few monasteries in China wherein are to be found some of Hanchow's old relics and architecture executed on carved stones as old as the eighth century A. D.

It is a city regarded by the Chinese as an earthly paradise for long four thousand years, and its name

and fame is sung even in the remotest corners of the country. Still it is a place of pilgrimage where come visitors in thousands to pay visits to its shrines and temples. It is the capital of Chekiang, a big province.

The 31st July. After my usual breakfast I bade good-bye to this the dear city of the Chinese to leave for Shanghai. The asphalted road ended after about a mile from the city wherefrom began the kuncha road. It too was in a hopeless condition. Nowhere I have found roads so wretched as in China. Highways are few and they too are not metalled.

The road to Shanghai runs along the coast of the Hangchow Bay, and while passing by this way I came across thousands of peasants and labourers working heart and soul day and night to protect the high road which was threatened by the Bay. In that time hundreds of villages in its neighbourhood were completely inundated, resulting in a great loss of life and property. It was probably the greatest flood the Central China had ever seen. Immediately after the receipt of this news the Government and the public rushed to the scene and contributed their entire energy to minister unto the needs of the sufferers. Food-stuffs and clothes were sent to the spot by aeroplanes for quick distribution. The Government lost no time to take steps against further encroachment of an inundation. The energetic and prompt response of the Chinese students and the public towards the cause of the needy and the poor

made me think and feel how less responsive we and our Government were towards the same.

After reaching Haiyen the same day I went direct to the police station for shelter, but the officers flatly refused me the same, remarking that they had no business with me ; thereafter I came out and found a shady tree to rest under. Soon a small crowd of young boys and girls gathered round me. For some-time some kept silent and to some other I came in for discussion, but they were not interfering in any of my business. A long while after a young Chinese came forward to ask me questions relating to my own self and my itinerary and then cordially invited me to his house. I appreciated his sense of hospitality.

His was a house poorly built of tiles and mud, and it was their only house wherein all his family-members used to live huddled together. They would have to move to some safe corner of the house whenever it would rain. It would become a pool of water. Sad luck, poor fellow ! He had three aged sisters besides his old parents, and so he had no one to help him in maintaining the family. He would find it very difficult to maintain them all with his meagre income, and so his debt was mounting up every month. Loan-business is very profitable in China as in India. Under it the poor suffer and suffer intolerably. The same problems stare in the faces of the poor and the middle class Chinese as those in India. And they require a tactful handling in both the countries.



There is much in common in our problems and theirs.

At dinner-time in their house I became the subject of their hearty laugh. We all sat round a table. On the table were kept rice, vegetables and meat in different plates, and we had our respective plates to eat on. I also was given a pair of chau-sticks (food-sticks). We took our food to our plates with a spoon and then began. I held the sticks with my fingers, but when I tried to pick up curry with it, it fell down, reminding me of the proverbial saying: 'There is many a slip between the cup and the lip.' It caused them a hearty laugh. At last I set out to explain with an apology my difficulties in the use of chau-sticks. Then they gave me a spoon and a fork. After our meal we used a hot towel over our faces. It's very, very refreshing to use a hot-water-towel—towel washed then and there in hot water. It is used when it is hot. It is the practice of the Chinese. They use it both before and after the meal and often during.

The following evening I managed to reach Shanghai and put up in the Gurudwara on East Paoshing Road in the Chinese town.

The Gurudwara-building is two-storied; the upper floor contains a hall used as the prayer-hall where the holy Granthaji is enshrined and the ground-floor is for the guests to stay free. They can have their grub too there and it is also free. Of course, I had taken my meals outside. The cost entailed in

the free supply of food is borne by the Sikh community.

Sincerely to speak, my joy knew no bounds when I found myself again in the midst of my fellow-countrymen, and, pleasing to note, I had my feelings reciprocated by them.

Not long after my arrival I accompanied one Sikh gentleman who took me to introduce to one Mr. N. N. Bagchi, belonging to my province, living in a building on the junction of Paoshing Road and Szechuen Road. Suffice it to say, it gave me great pleasure to talk with him in our own tongue. Following a short conversation we both left for the house of Mr. Das, another Bengalee, who was living closeby. At the entrance of his house we were accorded a very hearty welcome. Mr. Das had been serving in the Tram Company. He held a good position. In his boyhood he managed to leave India, went to China, picked up this job in Shanghai and had been living there since. He married a Chinese and had a daughter and a son by her. The jolly boy was attending school. Mr. Das was very sociable and truly a gentleman. His behaviour left a deep impression upon my mind.

At about eleven we returned to our respective lodges. I was feeling much sleepy, and so without a moment's delay I went to bed. Bed meant a cot, simply a cot. I had only one blanket and this was what I spread over it. I had nothing more, absolutely nothing, not even a pillow or a mosquito net. There

was complete stillness in the hall; everyone was asleep. Only the hoarse sound of one's breathing, sounding like a tiger's, was floating on to me. I was feeling restless, but still could not get to sleep. The clock on the wall was working as usual. It struck one, but I had no sleep yet, two, still no sleep, three, wide awake, at last four, yet no sleep, I was only killing mosquitoes and staining my palms. And at half past four I left the bed out of disgust. Really the mosquitoes made a good feast of me all throughout the night. They seemed to have been out with all their kith and kin for that. Next day when Mr. Bagchi earnestly requested me to put up with him, I could not refuse, and I stayed with him until my departure from the city.

During my short stay in the city I managed to meet many high officials, professional men and students. I came in touch also with different associations, but, painfully to say, cold and ill behaviour awaited me in many of the places. One morning I went for an interview with a prominent citizen, but he refused to see me, remarking that he hated to speak with a watchman. Not that I heard this remark in this place alone, I travelled in China to hear such remarks in many more. I had opportunities to mix with many professors and students, most of whom had asked me child-like questions about India, but many of them, I noticed, had not a very high opinion regarding my countrymen. Most of the educated Chinese hold, and they do it

sincerely, that the people of India are uncultured and unclean. But still they manage to respect our Mahatma Gandhi and Gurudev Tagore as two great savants in the present world. Gandhiji is known to the people as the greatest patriot and to many he is the greatest saint, often compared with their Lord Buddha. But very few of them understand his philosophy and doctrine of non-violence and passive resistance. It is pleasing to note in this connection that he is known even to the people of the remotest corners and even to those who do not know the name of their great leader late Dr. San Yat Sen. Tagore, the pride of our nation, is held in high esteem by every educated Chinese, but he is not so known to the illiterate. The people consider them as two roses in the jungle. I ponder over why the Chinese look so down upon us. Is it because they come across thousands of Indians, mostly uncultured and unclean, who work there either as watchmen in the houses of the rich people or as British policemen and soldiers who helped in their subjugation in many a place and on many an occasion? Is it because they harass the poor Chinese in so many ways and treat them as helots in their own land? They abuse the power and advantages of a policeman by often calling the helpless Chinese 'pig',—an abuse which they can hardly stand, and by slapping them for causes and no causes. The Indian police in Shanghai and elsewhere pose as their master, though, it is an irony, they

themselves are slaves, worst of slaves. Probably these are the reasons. When the educated Chinese take into account all these facts, they cannot stand, to say impartially, they cannot be expected to tolerate the presence of the Indians in their land.

In China as elsewhere no Indian news save and except a few of riots and murders and those of such characters finds publicity in the dailies. And so those who are interested in Indian news are left in absolute darkness to speculate about the conditions in India.

Shanghai is the second biggest city in the East, the population being a little over three and a half million. And of the foreigners Russians are the majority. It stands on the Hwang-Po which has met the Yang-Tse-Kiang at Wusung, twelve miles off the city.

This metropolis consists of three parts, namely, the French Town, the International Settlement and the Chinese Town.

The French Town is the French possession and therefore ruled by the French independent of others. It is always guarded by French gendarmes. Its streets are broad and kept quite neat and clean. It is the home of many an aristocrat, but most of the aristocrats, leading professional and business men live in the International Settlement which happens to be the most important business-centre. It contains Banks, offices of the Consuls, Government offices, hotels and restaurants and a host

of others. Clean roads, beautiful parks and squares and palatial buildings—all these have made it simply picturesque. It has two parks to be boast of. They are Jesfield Park and Bund Park. The former spreads over a vast area. Lovely gardens have been laid out in it. A small zoo adds to its many attractions. On certain days of the week the public can enjoy here the orchestra free. It is played by the Municipal Orchestra Party. Dog-race too is held here. The park lies in one corner of the city. The Bund Park lies in another extremity, facing the river, with huge buildings on its back. Its position is simply marvellous. Broadway Mansion, that twenty-two-storied building, the biggest in Asia and probably in Europe too, stands by its side. Flower-gardens and fountains, the artificial hill and the trees, the river in front and huge buildings on its back—all together have made it the most attractive of all. It has a fascination. It remains always crowded with peoples of different colours, cultures and sexes, though one has to get in for ten cents. So heavy is the traffic in this part of the river that it remains always jammed with junks, ships and launches.

The Settlement is governed by a Municipal Council consisting of members representing nine different Powers, such as, Britain, France, the U. S. A., Japan, etc. And of them all Britain holds more power and is virtually the ruler of the Settlement. Most of the important posts are held by the British and the

Commander-in-Chief of the International Volunteer Corps is also a British. The police-force of the Settlement is exclusively composed of British and Indians.

Next to the Settlement is the Chinese Town spreading over a larger area. Its streets are not so clean and spacious as those in other two parts. The houses too are small, poorly built, and they lie congested. It is inhabited by mostly poor people. This town is separated from the Settlement by a canal known as Soochow Creek. Indeed, there are several bridges over it, and trams and buses run over them. The best of parks in this town is the Hongkew Park wherein also is played the orchestra twice a week. Entrance to the best parks of the city is always regulated by tickets. A ticket for one year costs only one dollar, while the casual visitors are charged ten cents every time. This town is governed by the Mayor who is vested with all powers of administration.

Though well-guarded the city of Shanghai is, the rich people have always to live in fear; because scarcely a week passes without a case of daring kidnapping in the broad day-light.

After a week's stay in this great city I left for Nanking. The same day in the evening I reached Wutsin, a small town, after cycling about one hundred miles along the high way newly opened. I stayed there in a small hotel for the night. Early next morning, in the twilight, I started after a light breakfast consisting



of bread and butter and tea, reaching the outskirts of Nanking at dusk. Needless to say, the sight of the city brought me immense pleasure and with it a new strength and vigour, though I had by this time almost exhausted my strength.

It was deep dark when I reached the central police-station to discover one Mr. Ram Singh, a countryman of mine. As none in the police-station knew even A. B. C. of English, they sent for an English-knowing person. When he came, I asked him to be so good as to find out the address of the said gentleman from the register which he did with pleasure. He gave me the necessary direction too. It was about nine when I reached the address and knuckled at the door. The door immediately opened and came out a gentleman. When he saw me, a fellow-countryman of his, he could not restrain his feelings ; he received me in his breast in an ecstasy of joy. He was Mr. Ram Singh. He was a prominent silk merchant, living there for a number of years. There lived several other Indians including a Parsee gentleman who was serving in the British consulate. It is a matter of regret that the Parsees in China do not introduce themselves as Indians and always keep aloof from the Indian society. I stayed there three days only, but within this short period I received warm reception from many quarters.

Nanking is a walled city, situated on the Yang-Tsze-Kiang. It became the capital of the country many a time during its long life, but it had never been so developed

as in the fourth decade of the present century. Palatial buildings have been built up and wide roads have been laid out in and around the city.

It is a pure Chinese city both in its appearance and character. Seldom does a foreigner come to notice here, though it is fairly a big city, the population being about a million.

The city is nice, but it wants in parks—a want which is keenly felt by the citizens. There is, however, a lake known as 'Lotus Lake' in the suburb just outside the wall. A radio-set is there to entertain the visitors with songs and world-news. And then there are several islands known as Australia, Japan, etc., besides some floating restaurants. It is really pleasant to go round the islands by small boats in moon-lit nights when the lake with all its blossomed white lilies presents a charming scene.

In the outskirt of the city, on the Purple Mountain, lies the mausoleum of late Dr. San Yat Sen, the great Chinese leader of hallowed memory. It is some four miles from the city. In a coffin, specially constructed, Dr. Sen lies in eternal sleep and peace. His body is said to be in the same condition as before, although more than a decade have elapsed since his death. He was first buried in Peking, but later the coffin was removed to the present mausoleum, a magnificent building. One has to pass through several gates to reach the building. It stands in a lovely surrounding. A distinct view of the city can be had from here.

This place has become a place of regular pilgrimage where flock both native and foreign visitors in hundreds to pay their respectful homage to the revered memory of one who won universal admiration, love and respect. The coffin is opened on five particular days when the visitors can see Dr. Sen in his sleep. He is enshrined in the hearts of the millions of his countrymen who can never forget him. He is still the very life and bone of the Chinese nationalism.

Early in the morning of the 12th August I left Nanking for Tientsin. It is a long way, but the road was extremely wretched, and then at places I found no track at all. The communication system in this country is the worst of all I have found, and for this should be censured the political leaders of the country who have wasted so many valuable years after the death of Dr. San Yat Sen in party squabbles, forgetting their first and foremost duty to attend to the grievances of the peasants who form the bulky majority in the country. The economic condition of the peasants shows no sign of improvement from their condition in the pre-revolution days, I mean, before the Republic came into existence. The same burden of tax grinds them, and really they are sandwiched between heavy taxes and unfertility of the soil, between low prices of the agricultural products and high prices of the industrial. They look blank and lifeless.

As in communication system, so in agriculture and industry it is a most backward country. In so

vast a country there are only about fifteen thousand miles of railways and double of that are roads. But most of these railways even are under the management of the foreigners, particularly the British. For every bit of daily necessities the people have to depend upon the mercy of the foreigners. The vast natural resources of the country are exploited not by the Chinese but by others. Economically, the country is really bankrupt to-day.

Of the people of China the northern Chinese are more healthy. Their staple food is wheat while others' is rice. They take varieties of curries and make no distinction between meat and beef and pork. They cook curry without spices with bean oil—an oil which the foreigners do not like because of its odour. So bad is its odour that I could hardly take it nearer my mouth. Frogs and snakes are much relished by the southern Chinese. I have been told that dishes of snakes are meant for the guests, because they are costly. I have been further told that the more poisonous the snake is, the more delicious is the meat. But thank Heaven, I had nowhere to taste it. The Chinese are not very fond of milk. As cows are rare in northern China, the people have to drink the milk of camels and horses which are their domestic animals. But many complain of a bad odour in the milk.

The Chinese are terrible rice-eaters. They eat not once or twice, they do it five times a day if not more.

And always they drink tea instead of water. Tea in China is prepared without milk and sugar.

Most of the people are Buddhists and Confucians and the rest are Muslims and Christians. Buddhists though they are, they believe like the Indians in many gods and goddesses. They have many religious functions to perform a year, and hardly a month passes without it. In this respect they have much in common with the Indians.

Amongst the educated Chinese many are getting converted to Christianity from Buddhism, but it is gratifying to note that no canker of communalism exists here in any shape or form and disturbs the peace and tranquillity of the society. The people of different communities, Buddhists, Muslims and Christians, live side by side in absolute amity and concord. They know of no Mecca or Jerusalem or Buddha Gaya except their own country for which they live and fight and die. And it is this spirit which makes them think and act in terms of their country, and it is why there is no conflict of cultures in that country. They eat the same food, breathe the same air, talk the same language, write the same alphabets, and the same problems stare them in their faces, and then why should there be any conflict at all ?

Though principal dialects are about fifteen, the people have only one language to write and it is Chinese, a peculiar language with practically no alphabets of the sort we have. When one speaks to a person speaking

another dialect, the latter cannot understand the former ; but when it is written, it is understood by both ; because all write the same characters. I have been told that the number of Chinese words is in the neighbourhood of eighty thousand, and naturally one cannot be expected to know all these words, however great a scholar he may be. But still it claims, and quite rightly, to be one of the richest and oldest languages, spoken by the largest number of people in the world. There are many words which are said to have as many as sixteen different meanings each, and in every case the pronunciation varies. It is a hard job, indeed. It is a relief, however, that the big brains of the country are putting their heads together to devise ways and means to simplify the language in order to save the tremendous loss of energy of the people in learning their own language.

It is an age of great awakening in every sphere, and China too is not far behind the time, particularly in education. Hundreds and thousands of students are leaving the universities with diplomas every year. The girls too are taking increasing interest in education and other spheres. They are no more contented with their life within the four walls of their houses. And it is to this enlightened China the whole country looks for salvation economically and politically.

Though the distance between Nanking and Tientsin is great, I was determined to cover the distance any-

how within two weeks or so, and accordingly I walked and cycled daily as long as my strength permitted. It was simply because I felt uncomfortable in the villages. In many of the places I halted I got no generous man to shelter me. Sometimes I would find temples to pass nights.

It was the 25th August, the day I reached Tientsin and put up in the Y. M. C. A. in the French Town. That evening after dinner I set out for a little walk and while strolling along a principal road, I met a countryman of mine, a Sikh, and became so glad and pleased. He took me to his house and entertained me with tea and then pressed me to take my food there so long I was in the city. I agreed, for who prefers a foreign food, so disagreeable, to his own if available ?

There are about fifty Sikhs, two Sindhee merchants and a Parsee millionaire who owns a big hotel and several cinema-houses here. In this city I came across many White Russians who were living in exile. In fact, it seems to be a Russian city from its population. I became so sorry to see the educated Russians leading so miserable lives in this foreign land where most of them have often to work as watchmen and labourers. The doors of their fatherland are closed against them—who knows, for how long ?

They have knocked at the doors of their fatherland for entrance, but they have got a flat 'no' in reply. They want to live as honest citizens, but still they are refused. And for what fault of theirs

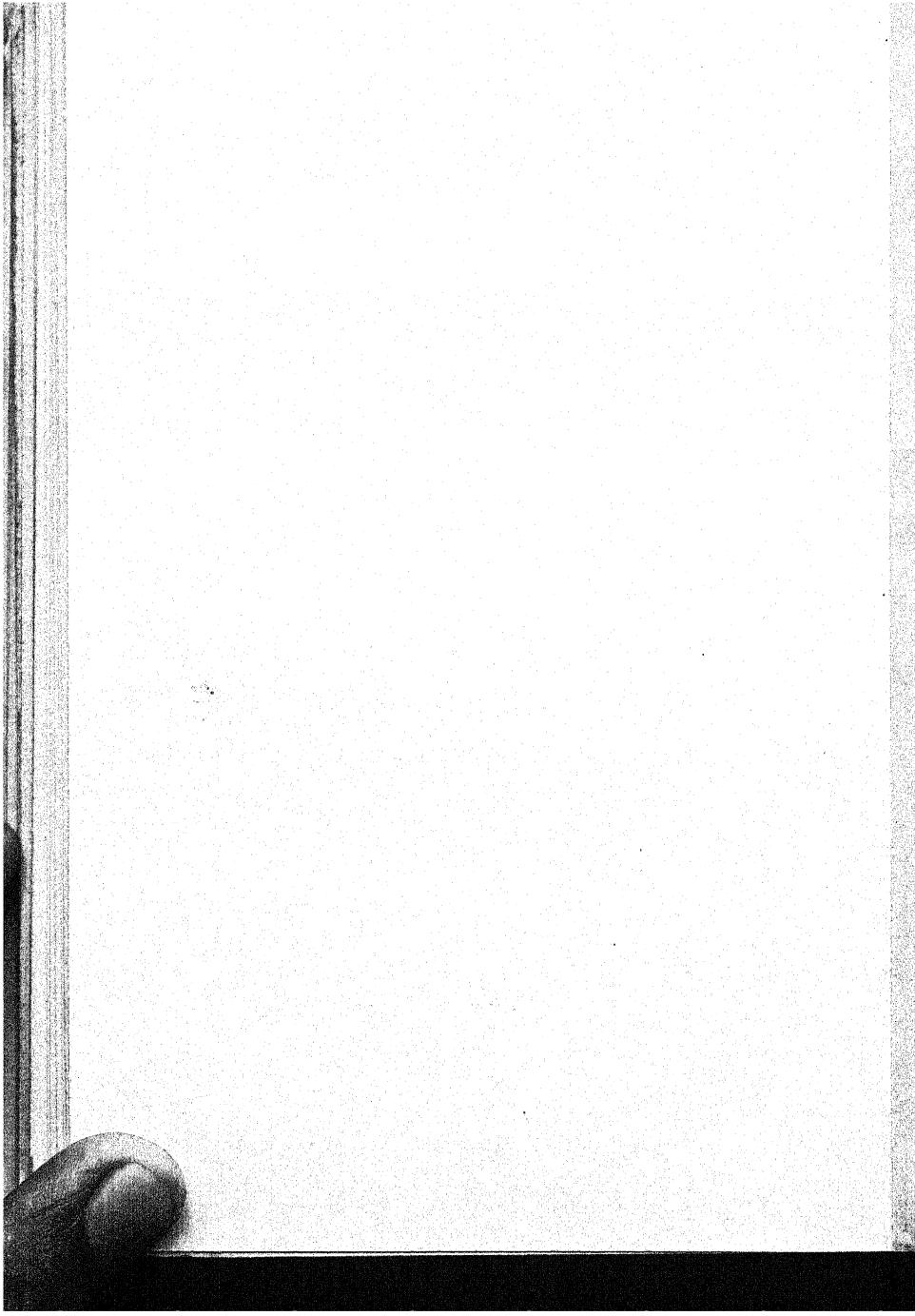


these lacs and lacs of White Russians have been banished ? Is it because some of them served in the Imperial army of Russia and fought against the socialists ? If so, surely they should not have been banished wholesale with their wives and mothers and children who possibly did no harm to the country which is as dear to them as it is to the socialists. Or is it to be inferred that the present government is not in a mood to tolerate the presence of those people who hold different views and want to work up to their own convictions ? And if this spirit of intolerance takes place of argument and forbearance, how can Democracy be established in this world of diverse peoples, diverse cultures and diverse outlooks ? Assuming for argument's sake that the Socialist Government of Russia is doing the right thing by turning out the White Russians, executing the eminent so-called Trotskytes and sending thousand others to gaol on one excuse or another, we have no cause then to blame Hitler or Mussolini. And similarly we shall have no cause to complain if one morning all the Governments of the world pursue the same policy. But what will be the net result ? Simply murder and chaos and in this will be lost the peace and tranquillity, the present culture and civilisation of the world of which we are so much proud.

Tientsin is a big city ; the population is about a million. It is the biggest port in the North, situated on the Pei-Ho. The river being small, the big ships



Author with his Japanese friend  
in Japanese costume



cannot proceed much up the stream, and hence they stop at its mouth, only a few miles away from the city. There a small town has grown up ; it is Tangku.

The city is divided amongst different Powers, namely, the British, the French, the Italian and the Japanese. And they govern their respective portions independently. The French and the British towns are separated from the rest by the river. Of all the towns the French and the British 'Concessions' are the best. They are neat and clean and inhabited mostly by aristocrats and foreigners. It is in this British Concession that the Indian temple (Gurudwara) stands on a lovely site.

The 28th August. Early morning I left the city for Peking, now called Peiping, reaching there towards evening. The distance is about eighty miles. <sup>Where</sup> too I chose to stay in the Y. M. C. A., but I had to move to the house of one Mr. Verhoomall, a Sindhee silk-merchant, simply to respect his wish. He was living with his family at 135, Morrison Street.

Peiping is a city, a little bigger than Tientsin, connected with many a romance and adventure of the Chinese history. It is surrounded by a wall, some forty feet high and forty to sixty feet thick. And within there is another wall dividing the city into two—one called the Manchu or Tartar City and the other the Chinese City. Inside the Manchu City is the Imperial City which contains a further enclosure. And the portion within the enclosure is

called 'Forbidden City' where stand the Imperial palaces with parks and gardens. The Imperial City contains the palaces of the Nobles, the public offices and barracks together with some private residences and temples. The entrance-fee is one dollar.

The Chinese City which lies to the south of Manchu City is densely populated and not so neat and clean. The best part of the whole city is the place where stand the foreign legations. It is administered by a committee formed by the legation authorities.

In and around the city there are many things well worth a visit. The Temple of Heaven stands in one corner of the city. Beside it lies another temple with a big altar in front. They are centuries old, but still in a very good condition. In another extremity of the city stands one old Lama Temple which contains among others one bronze image of Buddha and another image of a god who has four hands and four legs. Here I found a stone bearing some inscriptions quite resembling our Deb Nagri scripts, but I could decipher only two words. On the peak of the Peking hill there is one temple housing an image of a goddess who has many hands, heads and legs. And at the foot of the hill lies a big lake full of white lilies. Peking seems to be peeping from behind innumerable trees when viewed from the top of the hill.

About forty miles from Peking stands the famous Great Wall of China which runs up and down the

mountains. It was built by Shi-Hwang-Ti during the 3rd and 2nd century B. C. to check further invasions of the Huns.

After three days in Peking with Mr. Verhoomall I left early in the morning of the 1st September for Kalgan in Inner Mongolia, and on the way I had the most thrilling experience of my journey. The road runs up and down the hills and mountains, and then it was as bad as possible. I wanted to reach my destination the same day ; it is only one hundred and ten miles from Peking.

I went on, sometimes cycling and sometimes walking, and at mid-day I stopped at a small town to take my lunch. The lunch over, I began my journey again. And by dusk I had been able to cover only three fourths of the distance ; about thirty miles were yet to be cycled to reach the city. Some time later when I was going down a hill, I heard, to my horror and surprise, a boom of a rifle, succeeding it another, and with that a bullet struck my cycle ; I fell down immediately and lost my senses. I know not how long I had been in that state and what had followed. When I came to senses and opened my eyes, I found myself on a stretcher, attended by a young Chinese who was fanning me, in a hut on a hill. It was guarded by half a dozen Chinese soldiers of robust health. Finding myself in such a condition I could not make bold to ask them anything about my cycle and the bag. At close intervals a cold shiver ran through my



body as I thought of the consequences. I was badly in need of sleep and rest, but could not sleep due to severe pain all my body over. Fortunately I was not much injured. The night seemed to be very long and many wild dreams came to haunt me whenever I fell adozing. Most of the time I tossed on the bed and thus killed the night. The day broke out at long last with all its brilliance, but it brought me no hopeful message. Time seemed to pass on very slowly and to me every minute appeared to be an age. I was not permitted to leave the house. Every window of the hut was closed, and so even the day looked dark as night. At about ten I got a little water for use, and a little while after a fierce-looking man entered the hut with two half-baked breads and vegetable curries for me. I couldn't take even half the food, because I lost my appetite probably due to fear.

About an hour after when all the guards left the house, I gathered courage to ask my attendant what they were going to do with me. In reply he asked me by gestures to keep silent; because the guards were there. Towards evening more than a dozen soldiers came in and asked me to accompany them, and I acted accordingly. They started with myself in the centre and walked on in the darkness of the night along the bridle-paths up and down the mountains. My health this day was not such as could stand the strain of this journey. The previous day I cycled until nightfall when I fell down which



caused a severe pain all my body over which was still present, and besides I was weak for want of proper food.

Often in the dark I began to stumble down and every time I wanted to revolt, but soon better counsels prevailed over me, and I went on. I walked about six hours at a stretch and my strength was exhausted. I was now not in a position to walk even a step further without proper rest and food, and I sat down. What I now got in reply from them? Blows and kicks. They were profusely showered on me whenever I wanted to rest. Thus I went on. Towards morning they halted at a wayside place and there they confined me for the day in a small house. In the evening they resumed their journey and stopped at the last hour of the night. After three days' walk in this way they reached their destination and presented me before their captain. It was the 5th September.

The captain looked young and smart. His was a stalwart figure, commanding respect from all. His eyes were dark and bright, and his face wore signs of a leader. He sat on an ordinary chair before a table on which there were a few bundles of papers. Behind him a revolver was hanging on the wall, and on his right and left there were pictures of Lenin and Stalin. I was rather astonished to see those pictures there. Now I came to understand that they were communists, and not bandits whose notoriety was so well-known.

On my entrance into the captain's room I was offered a chair. Then followed several questions in quick succession. The captain wanted to know who I was, where I was going and with what object. Lastly he wanted me to convince him that I was not a foreign spy. It put me to an awkward position. How could it be possible for me to convince him about my bonafides when I had no materials at my disposal? Mere words would not help me much. So, I frankly told him all about my difficulty and gave him to understand that I had a suitcase, of which I had no knowledge since I was arrested, containing things supporting my bonafides. Thereupon he asked an orderly to bring there my suitcase from the adjoining room. When it was brought, I opened it and placed before him among others my diary, press-cuttings concerning myself and several introductory letters, particularly the one which I received from our Mahatmaji. He now believed me and expressed his sincere regret for the troubles I was subjected to. Then we had a little friendly talk, in course of which I was a bit astonished to hear him speaking very highly of our Gandhiji for whom he had great love and respect.

At last he set me free. On my request he sent a few of his soldiers to accompany me upto where I fell in their hands. Before I was let off, the captain asked me to particularly remember that I might fall a victim again, in case I divulged anything of this incident to any

one. I acted accordingly until I left China. I got back my suitcase, but not the cycle which did not probably reach there. I came back to Peking on the 11th instant and stayed two days this time and then left for Moukden in Manchuria on a new bicycle.

## MANCHURIA

I arrived at Moukden on the 24th September after cycling about six hundred miles from Peking and stayed in a hotel. Enroute I had the same monotony to feel and the same difficulties came up as before. I moved always in suspense. Lonely life in the villages was as distasteful as before. For days and days together I would not find a single person to talk with and often it would become unbearable to me, but still I proceeded on.

The people of Manchuria are of the same stock as the Chinese, and all their things—their appearance and dress, customs and manners and food, culture and civilisation—support the contention that they and the Chinese are one and the same indivisible. It gave me a great satisfaction to notice here complete absence of ill-feelings between different communities. Indeed, China is reluctant not to have yet any communalist of the brand we have in India.

Until the other day Manchuria was a part and parcel of the Republic of China, but in 1931 it was annexed to the Japanese empire. Japan is said to have a military programme for twenty-five years which is said to have been chalked out long before the Sino-Japanese conflict in Manchuria. They were prepared for the war while the Chinese were not, and they fell upon her

to conquer Manchuria. The Japanese took the Chinese by surprise. The latter could not put up any fight worth the name. They retreated and retreated, and Manchuria was conquered within a wink without any loss of life. And for their conveniences' sake they have enthroned Kang-Teh, a member of the late Manchurian Royal Family.

Japan conquered Manchuria firstly for raw materials to satisfy the ever growing needs of her factories, secondly for exploiting the vast natural resources, and thirdly for checking the Soviet propaganda which was being carried on in China, Manchuria and Korea by the Red agents. In all these objects of hers she has been partly successful. And it is now the strong foothold of Japan and serves as a great military station. The present ambition of the Japanese political adventurers is to get hold of Outer Mongolia to cut off the direct link of Russia with China and to put a stop to the Soviet propaganda in the Far East. If she is successful in it, sooner or later the entire Asiatic Russia will slip out from the hands of the Socialist Russia. And if she is not successful, it may not be possible for her to check the tide of communism at home and in her empire. On the other hand, Russia too is determined to fight to the last man to protect her vital interests in the Far East. So, she has planted colonies near the lake Baikal, has established many factories and built up several military stations for the purpose, lest it be difficult for her to fight a

modern war on the border of Manchuria from Moscow, a long way off. Manchuria is likely to be a storm-centre in the near future when both the advanced countries will have a trial of strength. That will, probably, be the greatest opportunity for China to strike a deadly blow at Japan and drive her from her soil.

While Manchuria was independent, she was really in a miserable condition. The people were illiterate and the lives of the rich people were unsafe even in the towns and cities. To say in a word, it was an abode of bandits. Roads were few and the communication system was miserable. This was the condition of Manchuria when in 1931 Japan came, but within this short period the appearance of the country has completely changed. Hundreds of schools have been started and many thousand miles of roads and railways have been built up. New towns have sprung up and trade has thrived. Mines have been discovered and they are being exploited to the benefit of the Japanese and the natives. Law and order has been established and the lives of the people are at present safe everywhere. As a result of all-round developments the economic condition of the people has become better. Manchuria has really achieved a wonderful development, but all this has been done by Japan probably for her own economic and political interests.

Moukden is one of the oldest cities in Manchuria. Its population is about 400,000, while that of

Manchuria is 17,948,540. It was once the seat of the government of the country, but it is no more. The present capital is Hsinking.

During the Boxar war the city was heavily damaged. It also witnessed the terrible Russo-Japanese war which resulted in the victory of the latter who entered the city after a fortnight's fierce battle.



## KOREA

Moukden I left on the 28th September, reaching Seoul in Korea on the 5th October. I stayed here in a Japanese hotel. As it was winter this time, I had to feel a lot of troubles in the villages for want of sufficient winter clothes. Most of the nights I had to pass in the railway stations. The villages in Korea present a picture not very different from that we find in China. But it is true, economically the peasants who form the bulky majority in the country are much better off than their brethren in China. In education too they are more advanced than the Chinese. They have no literature of their own except the Chinese. They write also Chinese characters and their contribution to the Chinese literature is not little. Indeed, they are also Chinese, of the same stock and blood. Their food, customs and manners, their appearance and dress—their everything points to the same.

Korea, whose other names are Cho-sen and Dai-han, is a big Peninsula, six hundred miles long and about one hundred and thirty-five miles wide, and it is mountaineous. It has got a very fertile soil.

Most of its people are Buddhists and Confucians, the rest are Christians and Muslims. The Indian culture came here with Buddhism probably towards the 4th century A.D. while Christianity was introduced here

towards the end of the 18th century. It served as a bridge between India and Japan over which the Indian culture and civilisation travelled with Buddhism to the beautiful islands of Japan and established successfully their hold on the people which still remains unshaken.

In 1894 a war broke out between Japan and China, ending in favour of the former who declared Korea's independence, and the king of Korea assumed the title of 'Emperor of Korea', and the country was named Dai-han in 1899. Towards the close of 1903 Russian influence became evident all over the Peninsula, and sometime later Japan declared war against Russia, and the result was the victory of the Japanese who shortly after the war annexed Korea to her empire. Within this period Japan has been able to bring about a radical change in the appearance of the country. New ports have sprung up and trade has thrived. Industry and agriculture have developed, education has spread and communication system has become better, law and order has been established. But inspite of all these developments the educated Koreans do not much favour the Japanese rule. They are eager for the emancipation of their motherland from the yoke of Japan. For this their legitimate desire they have suffered much and are still suffering extreme persecutions. There are many among them who are determined to lay down their lives at the altar of freedom for their dear motherland.

Seoul, whose other name is Keijo, is the capital of the country. It is situated in lovely surroundings of hills and a river. It is a city visited by hundreds of visitors every year. It can boast of several interesting things.

From this city I proceeded to Fusan, a port in the southern extremity of the country. The way is mountaineous, and hence I had much trouble to feel to travel this way. It was so tiring and troublesome, but, thank God, it was the cold season, and then I had not to be afraid of thieves and bandits even at night because of their absence in the country. In this country I was happy to find the policemen more considerate, sympathetic and helpful towards the foreigners. And it lessened my difficulties in the villages to a great extent.

Fusan is a small city and it contains nothing worthy of notice. It is a noted sea-port. I stayed here three days which swiftly passed away in the pleasant company of my new acquaintances, mostly students. I decided to catch a boat here for Japan and accordingly left the shores of Korea by a Japanese boat. It was October 17.

On my arrival at the harbour I found all my new friends waiting eagerly for me. I was sincerely happy to see them love me so much. As the time was up, I boarded the ship without any delay and shortly after the boat left the pier in the midst of cheers of my friends and others. We kept looking at each

other until we went out of sight. Now I turned to my own business. I entered the hall for a little space for myself. I was a deck-passenger. In the hall I found a large gathering of Chinese and Japanese. They were standing calmly and quietly for place. I admired their sense of discipline. I added to the crowd, but we had not to stand long. Soon came there three officers of the boat and arranged things. Everything went smoothly and we were happy.

Its deck was not like that of a ship belonging to a non-Japanese company. Here we were accommodated on a matted platform. In every Japanese ship deck means a matted platform while in the non-Japanese ships deck means a dirty wooden floor. Our deck was fitted with electric fans and it contained a well-equipped modern bath-room fitted with hot and cold water-taps and a hot water reservoir used as a tub. And then we were supplied blankets and rubber-pillows. These comforts are denied to the deck-passengers in the non-Japanese ships. The services of the Japanese too are highly commendable.

As I was feeling giddy shortly after the boat had moved, I went for a pleasant cold bath, but I could not have it, because several youngmen were taking their baths in nude condition. And whenever I had turned up for it, the same scene greeted me. I could not have my bath that night, though I was craving for it.

Before dusk we were served our dinner. It was a

pure Japanese meal consisting of rice, meat, fish and varieties of curries cooked with bean oil, but without spices. Some Chinese even could not taste it, not to speak of myself. It was disagreeable to the Chinese, because the Japanese process of cooking is a bit different from theirs and naturally the taste too must be different. Indeed, I could find little difference between the two foods. The authorities supplied me, however, on my request fried fish and rice for which I paid them extra.

After dinner I came out to the open deck to enjoy the scenery, but what was there to see except a vast expanse of blue water and, up above, a blue sky? I went there not to see the scenery alone, I was there to get absorbed in thoughts—thoughts of my brothers and relations and friends, and often I began to wander in many lands. And thus I spent a good long time, leaning over the railing. When the night deepened, I retired to my bed, but could not close my eyes immediately; because the Chinese whose seats were next to mine were keen to converse with me. I wanted to avoid further talks by short answers, but failed. Of the three young Chinese two were students of the Imperial University of Tokyo while the third was going with a Government stipend to prosecute higher studies on salt. Now they were bound for Moji whence they would entrain for Tokyo. We had no subject to talk on. We went on talking on miscellanea. And by the time our talk was over we

became fast friends. Before going to bed they extended me an invitation to stay with them in Tokyo. I agreed, but I was sorry to act otherwise while there. It was mid-night when we parted to sleep, hoping to be in Japan next morning.

## JAPAN

Early next morning, October 18, when I came out to the open deck, I found our boat in standing before a small island. It at once filled me with joy to see my long-cherished desire fulfilled. Many small fishing-boats were moving to and fro, and they were hurrying up to reach their respective destinations. They all were propelled by motors—a thing which surprised me greatly. In other countries the fishermen have to row their boats themselves, but in Japan their condition is quite different. So, before setting my foot on the soil of Japan I was so happy to see signs of wonderful developments of the country in all directions.

The boat waited there about an hour for a doctor who came on board to examine everyone of the passengers to see if any one of them were suffering from any contagious disease. After he had come, the boat moved again towards Moji whose hundreds of chimneys of factories were now quite visible. By this time the whole country was bathed in the sweet rays of the morning sun. The passengers were growing impatient to land more and more with moments. They changed their clothes, parted their hairs and got ready to land with bags and baggages. Every face beamed with joy. They went through certain formalities and obtained necessary



permits in their passports and so they were now counting moments for the ship to touch a wharf. Before long it reached the pier amidst joyous cheers of the passengers and their friends and relations ashore. Amongst all these cheerful passengers there was one, sitting in the smoking-room of the first class passengers before the passport-officers, depressed and disheartened, looking pale and pulled down. It was myself. I was refused the permit for landing on the plea that I had not adequate fund with me. At the moment I had only £ 14 which amounted to about 240 yens (100 sens=1 yen. £1=Rs.13/5/4p.). I was left in the custody of the Purser. A little while after some press-representatives, I do not know where they had got the news about myself, called on me. They regretted very much at the conduct of the officers, but they were helpless. However. at the close of our talks they caught me in their respective cameras and wished me every success in my ambition. I appreciated their courtesy and goodwill towards me.

At mid-day the boat weighed anchor and proceeded to Kobe, its destination. The day passed and the night came, but the boat was running as fast as before. Now and then I could sight islands, some inhabited and some not, and this would break the monotony of the scene. The scenery was simply charming and it allured me. I began to feel an irresistible urge to anyhow visit this beautiful land of cherry blossoms

which was the dream of my youth and boyhood. But I was helpless.

The following morning it reached Kobe. The same performance was acted here,—the passport-officer came aboard to examine all our passports and allowed every one to land except myself. He refused me the permit on the same pretext. But in reply to my pressing request he at last said that he could permit me to land if anyone in the city had stood surety for me. At this I requested him to be so good as to allow me to land for at least half an hour to find out any such gentleman, and also suggested to him to send policemen with me if he had the least suspicion about my bonafides. But they were not acceptable to him. At last I requested him to give me the phone-number of Mr. Sahay, so that I could ring him up from the boat to know if he could help me in this my difficulty. He promised to let me know the number by phone and then went away. After his departure I went to see several pressmen who were awaiting me. They asked me many questions, mostly regarding my travels and adventures, and at last fixed up their cameras to catch me inspite of my unwillingness.

The boat was to sail back at half past twelve and it was now eleven. but no news yet regarding the phone number. I became restless and began to weep. Then suddenly came a call and the purser received it and a while after he gave me the phone-number. I was happy, but soon turned gloomy when I was told

that it was Sunday. Yet I rang up and it was received by a clerk in the office of Messrs B. Naraindas & Co., a prominent Indian firm in Kobe, whose manager was Mr. Sahay. I related to him everything and requested him to be so kind as to extend me his helping hand.

He agreed and immediately came by a taxi and asked the purser to allow me to land on his surety. Thereupon the purser rang up the passport officer and conveyed the proposal. In reply he called my Indian friend to his office where he went at once and stood surety for me for the time being in the absence of Mr. Sahay. He then came to the office of the water-police for a permit for my landing.

It was past twelve when both of us disembarked with my luggage. Now I could not know how to convey him my heart-felt thanks and gratitude, but for whose kindness and promptness with which he worked I would surely have to go back by the same boat.

From the wharf we went direct to the police-station to surrender my passport and thence to 'India Lodge', the only Indian boarding-house in Kobe, on Kamitsutsui Dori, 2 Chome. The clock struck two when we stepped into the premises of the boarding-house.

Next morning I called on Mr. Sahay at his office and told him all that had happened. He very much regretted to hear my tale and gladly agreed to stand surety for me. And immediately he sent his private secretary

with his letter of surety to the police office. My passport was returned to him.

Mr. Sahay is a nice fellow. He is quite a good gentleman. He extends his helping hand to everyone who requires his help and guidance in that far off country. He is held in esteem both by Indians and Japanese in Kobe. He is a prominent figure there. He has done good by establishing the boarding-house there. The Indian merchants in Japan helped him in this matter with handsome donations. They are noted for their munificence. They contribute liberally to all good causes.

The boarding-house is a two-storied wooden building. It contains twelve spacious rooms which are all mattressed in the Japanese style. Its doors and windows are made of thick paper attached on the frames of thin pieces of wood and they are fitted in such a way that one can open them by pushing them aside. Everywhere in Japan, in boarding-houses or in private houses, such kind of doors and windows are found. It is strange and surprising that no cases of theft are reported, though the doors and windows give way so easily. It shows how honest the people of Japan are. I know of only two countries in this world where thieves no longer exist; it is Japan and Iran. In the latter country Reza Shah has taken drastic steps to get rid of them while in the former no action is necessary in this respect, because the people are honest.

I was quite happy in this house. Here lived a young Indian student, a Madrased journalist who came on a holiday trip and a poor Japanese couple. As the Japanese gentleman knew a little English, I had no difficulty to talk with him. And this opportunity I availed to learn some Japanese. He paid me a visit almost daily. One evening he invited me and those two colleagues of mine to a dinner at his father's house. I heartily accepted the invitation, because I wanted to know something of the Japanese system of entertaining guests. At the entrance of his house we were given a cordial welcome by his old parents. We put off our shoes at the entrance as is the custom in Japan. We were then conducted to the mattressed room and offered comfortable cushioned seats around a small dining-table. The room was not so big. The house had only two rooms—one was wherein we sat and the other was their kitchen. And so it contained lots of things, but everything was in order. It was clean and decorated with flowers and pictures. It was fitted with electric lights and a radio-set. From this one should not think that they were well off financially. They belonged to the poorest class of people in Japan. The fellow was a *darwan* of a high school. Indeed, the standard of living of an average Japanese is much higher than that of any people in the world, of course if one's standard of living is judged by the amenities of life he enjoys generally. It is very risky to say so about Japan at a time when many politicians and

economists of repute say that the standard of living of the Japanese is very low and getting lower day by day, and some of them try to establish it by showing how much they earn and how much they spend on different items. But in my opinion it is not the right measure-stick to judge one's standard of living, because it leads to a wrong conclusion. The correct way of judging the standard of living of the people is, in my opinion, to get into the houses to peep into the daily life of the people. Then what we see in Japan and in some advanced countries of Europe which speak so much of their standards of living in season and out of season? Let facts alone tell. In Japan there is hardly a village or a home without electric lights while it is not so in Italy, France or in Britain. In the latter countries there are innumerable villages which are without electric lights. In Japan in most of the homes there are radio-sets while it is a thing of luxury to the poor people, nay, even to the most of the middle class people in those countries of Europe. Then, the people of Japan use silk for their costume while they can not afford. Almost every home in Japan subscribes newspapers. Two or three editions of the papers with the latest news and articles are brought out daily and supplied to the subscribers promptly and regularly, while the circulation of the dailies in those countries is much less; even many of the middle class people cannot afford to subscribe papers. Examine the figures of circulations of the papers and see if my contention is





A Japanese peasant girl in her typical national costume





correct. It is to be remembered that of all papers in Europe British papers have the greatest circulation. They are subscribed in large numbers outside Britain too, but still what is their circulation? The largest circulation of a paper is a million, if not less, and there are probably three or four papers which have circulation over a lac each, while in Japan *Ashahi Shimbun*, the biggest daily, has a circulation over two million and the second biggest paper, *Osaka Mainichi*, has a circulation over one and half million. Besides these two dailies there are five or six more, each having a circulation over one lac. It is to be noted that Japanese papers, written as they are in Japanese, are subscribed only by the Japanese. Then the Japanese peasants use shoe-protectors when in the fields (a kind of long rubber-shoes worn over the ordinary shoes in order to protect them from mud and water) while the European peasants cannot afford to buy them. These are ample evidences, and there are many more, to support my contention. To put it more precisely, when I see a Japanese living in a matted room fitted with electric lights and radio-sets, wearing silk instead of cotton, reading newspapers, and by his side a British or a French living in a house without electric lights and radio-sets, wearing cotton and reading no newspaper, I come to the only conclusion that the former's standard of living is higher than the latter's.

In education too Japan does not lag behind any of

the advanced countries of the world ; on the other hand, it tops the lists of university-students of different countries of the world excluding Russia. The approximate figures are as follows : Russia—550,000, Japan—146,000, Germany — 74,000, France — 73,000, Italy—73,000, Britain—54,000. The present number of students in Japan is approximately 12,074,000 out of 66,296,000, the total population of Japan proper. 99½% of the population are literate.

Now to return to the dining-table. Just a few minutes after we had taken our seats the hostess came and served us dinner. There were plates of rice, curries, meat and fish on the table and from them we took to our respective plates with spoons. Ere long our hosts too came and took their seats round the same table. We had to begin first. We tried to eat with food-sticks as the Japanese do, but failed. So we took spoons and forks. Fruits were a good item of our meal. We got plenty of fruits of different kinds. And instead of cold water we got *o'cha* to drink. The Japanese never drink cold water ; they drink *o'cha* instead. *O'cha* means tea ; it is prepared without milk and sugar. They are so fond of it that they often eat rice with it. After dinner we were entertained with Japanese melodies and late at night we took leave of our hosts, wishing them goodnight.

One morning I went to visit the agricultural farm of Akasi. I was quite warmly received by the teaching-staff there. As they were not conversant

with English, they sent for Mr. Roy, one and the only Indian student there, to work as our interpreter. I was glad to see him, a countryman of mine. He had not more than a working-knowledge of Japanese, but with it he managed to interpret us. I was taken round the gardens of flowers, fruits and vegetables, and then round their laboratory and museum preserving different soils and seeds of several countries. I visited also the engine-room and the canning department which interested me most. I was taken at last to the library where I was entertained with tea. Following a short conversation over the cup of tea when I stood up to say them good-bye, a student came and presented me some fruits and flowers of their gardens. I have been told that the villages are grouped, and every professor is put in charge of a group of villages. They visit these villages with their students once a week and talk to the peasants about modern agriculture and enlighten them on the latest results of their researches on the subject. They instruct them what to do or what not to do for increasing the fertility of the soil and producing better crops and for things connected with the interest of the peasants. They pay them visits occasionally to see if their instructions are translated into action.

The Japanese peasants owe a great deal to the scientists and the government who spare no pains to better their economic condition. Their sincere efforts

have yielded a good result. In almost every Prefecture ( Province ), which is smaller than an Indian district ( Japan consists of some forty-eight such Prefectures ), there is an agricultural college and a common policy guides them. Due to their efforts the productivity of the soil has become more than double. Japan is a small country, densely populated, but it produces at present so much food-stuffs that the people export them to other countries after meeting their own needs. Its principal crop is paddy. Every inch of its land is under cultivation ; not a piece of waste land comes to notice anywhere in the country which is mountainous.

What to speak of Japanese industry ? The development of its industry has dumbfounded the rest of the world. Japan has left its rivals far behind in this respect. Honesty, power of organisation, talent and hard labour of the people have brought about this wonderful industrial revolution. Cottage-industry occupies a unique position in the country. But there is a world of difference between their cottage-industry and ours. They have not machines of medieval age to work with as we have. Our hand-loom, *charkha*, *ghanee* and the like are all out of date and therefore cannot have any place in their cottage-industry. They use most up-to-date small machines which can be run even by the female members of the families in their leisure hours at home. And it is mainly due to this most developed cottage-industry that the Japanese goods

sell so cheap. The labourers also are very honest—so honest that no one has to be engaged to always look after their work. They work heart and soul. Their masters too treat them fair and square and they are not so selfish as the factory-owners in our country are. The labourers think that their pecuniary condition will rise and fall with that of their masters, and their feelings are equally reciprocated by them, and it is why there is so little labour-unrest in Japan.

Economically the Japanese labourers are much better off than even the middle class Indians. In the evening when they come out for stroll in gorgeous silken clothes, who can say that they are labourers? They also make use of gas stoves for cooking food—a thing which many of our higher middle class people even cannot afford to. Indeed, gas and electricity are much cheaper than fuel in Japan.

Another morning I accompanied several friends of mine to see the Japanese theatrical art in an opera-house at Takarazuka. Takarazuka is a small town, lying beside a mountain river amidst lovely surroundings. It is only a few miles away from Kobe. It is famous for its opera-houses.

We went to Kamitsutsui electric railway station which was within a stone's throw from our lodge. We purchased return tickets, each costing sixty sens only. One has not to hurry up to catch electric trains, because they run at an interval of every ten minutes. Of course, they do not stop at any station

for more than a minute or so. Each train generally consists of two compartments which are cleaned after every ten or fifteen minutes and naturally, therefore, they cannot get dirty. It contains only one class and the seats are very comfortable, far better than the seats of even a first class in an Indian train, better even than the seats in the continental trains except the British. But the Japanese trains are kept more clean than the British. Even in regard to other comforts of the passengers the Japanese authorities are more careful, and, in fact, it is more comfortable to travel by Japanese trains than even by British. It is only in Japan that the passengers have not to worry for a moment for their luggages. They are carried free by the authorities upto the destination by the same train. Simply buy printed slips, three or four per sen, and write down the names and addresses and the destination and then hand them over to the luggage office for a receipt. Coolie charges even have not to be paid. At the destination too one has not to wait long to take delivery of his goods. The clerks are very smart. Apart from all these conveniences train-fares are cheap. And then the railway-staff are too mild and courteous. When the ticket-inspectors come to perform their duty, they do not ask the passengers to show their tickets. They simply bow down, and they do it before every passenger, at which the passengers understand and produce their tickets. Likewise, when the passengers go out



of stations, the ticket-collectors at the gate bow low before each and every passenger and thank him when the ticket is handed. It is a hard job, indeed. We do not meet with such a mild and courteous treatment anywhere else in the world. The government of Japan have done good by abolishing the class-distinction in the electric trains, trams and buses.

Soon we reached Takarazuka, about an hour's journey from Kobe. It has a good number of opera-houses. We went to its biggest opera-house. For entrance into the huge building we paid thirty sens each and again we were required to pay thirty sens each for the performance.

It is a four-storied building. It contains hotels and restaurants, a market and a show-room. Every thing was clean and in order. As there is no class-distinction in the cinema-houses and opera-houses of Japan, we were at liberty to take our seats on any of the four storeys to witness the performance. We chose our seats on the 3rd storey. The vast hall was crowded almost to suffocation, though the play had been running for several weeks past. The special feature of this opera-house is that no male is allowed to play on this stage. It is the girls who appear in roles of both male and female characters.

After a few minutes the play began with dances following a Japanese song in chorus. They danced in both American and Japanese styles. Their dances in semi-nude condition were the worst imita-

tion of the Americans. But even at that time there was pin-drop silence. There was no smoking, no talk, not even a whisper in this vast hall. It testifies to the innate virtue of the character of the Japanese.

When the curtain dropped, we came out of the hall and entered a restaurant. At the entrance we were received by a girl. It is the Japanese custom to receive guests or customers at the entrance and it is strictly followed everywhere in Japan. Generally the girls are entrusted with this task. After dinner when we were leaving the restaurant, the same girl bowed again and gave us their customary thanks. From there we went to visit the zoo situated opposite the opera-house. The evening being cold, we could not stay there long. We hurried to the station to catch an electric train.

Kobe has several important places and things well worth a visit. They are Nunobiki water-fall, Mayasan, Rokko mountain, underground railway stations and the rope-way trams.

Mayasan is the name of the temple situated on the peak of the hill. From the peak-station of the cable-car railway one has to walk about one hundred feet to reach the temple. In Japan the devotees place coins at the door of the temple when they visit it.

A cable-car consists of two compartments only and two cars run up and down simultaneously with the help of a rope which is carefully examined by the

authorities every day. The railway runs straight up to the peak.

The peak of the beautiful Rokku Mount can be reached by what is called rope-way cars. They are small cars ; each has room for only eight passengers. It is fastened to an electric wire which keeps it hanging. At places of danger there are iron-nets below to receive the cars, in case they fall down. Really this journey is highly enjoyable. From the peak a distinct view of the cities of Kobe and Osaka can be had. The houses look like white flowers on a piece of green cloth when viewed from the peak of the mountain.

Kobe is the biggest port, situated close to Osaka—the biggest industrial city of Japan. It looks very beautiful because of its situation at the foot of the hill, about fourteen hundred feet high, facing the sea. Its roads are broad and clean. Motomachi is the principal shopping street on which stand most of the palatial buildings of the city. It wears a gala appearance every evening when electric lights of so many diverse colours are displayed in the buildings from end to end. The city abounds in cinema-houses and dancing-halls, cabarets and tea-houses. For communication in the city there are electric trains, trams and buses ; charges are moderate. It requires only six pence to travel to any part of the city by a tram-car.

It is a cosmopolitan city, the population being of

diverse nationalities and diverse characters. About eight lacs of souls inhabit the city. Of the foreigners about six hundred are Indians, almost all of whom are businessmen, mostly hailing from Bombay and Sind. One evening on the eve of my departure from the city a meeting was held to receive me in the Congress Hall under the auspices of the local branch of the Indian National Congress and in this meeting the Indian merchants of Kobe presented me a purse as a token of their appreciation of my adventurous spirit.

After a week in Kobe I left for Osaka, the Manchester or Chicago of Japan. It is an hour's journey from Kobe by a cycle. It is the second biggest city of Japan, the population being about three million. It is principally an industrial city as Ahmedabad in India. Most of the large industrial plants of Japan, mostly textile, are here. It is divided by several canals, all of which have fallen into the Osaka Bay. It has spacious roads and magnificent buildings.

It was October 26, the day I reached Osaka and put up with Mr. Mehrottra, a merchant, who had extended me an invitation to stay with him. At the entrance of his house I was accorded a hearty welcome on my arrival by the members of his family.

The following morning I got an invitation to visit the offices and the press of Osaka Mainichi, and I was glad to accept it. I was warmly received there. I was entertained with tea in their reception-

hall, and this over I was taken round the different departments of this huge establishment. It is a daily paper. Its circulation is said to be one and half million. There were twenty-five rotary machines at that time. I was told that the said number of copies could be printed within only half an hour. Everything—from paper-packing to posting—is done by machines. The most attractive of all in the establishment is the department of tele-photo. It takes only five minutes or so to receive a photo through it from their branch office in Tokyo, a distance of some three hundred miles. In this five-storied building there are one public-hall, one cinema-house, one dispensary, one hospital, one hotel, one hair-dressing saloon and a guest-house besides the offices and the press. All those things are exclusively for the employees of the paper.

From the office of Osaka Mainichi I went to the building of *Ashahi Shimbun*, the biggest daily in the world. Its circulation is about two million. This Ashahi Building contains among others an ice-skating hall. It has also the tele-photo department. Both the dailies honoured myself by giving me too much prominence in their columns. They wield great influence over the people. They own aeroplanes. They claim to have more than ten thousand correspondents each all the world over.

It was the day for the yearly display of air-manceuvring over the cities of Kobe and Osaka. The programme

had been made known to the public through press and platform and the citizens had been asked to act according to the instructions of the authorities. The citizens were called upon to put out their lights in the evening for about two hours when the enemy would be attacking the city from air. It was an arrangement for imparting the public a lesson as to how they should behave in the event of an attack from air. The young military cadets fixed up anti-aircraft guns on every big building of the cities to bring down the enemy aeroplanes. According to the programme two aeroplanes flew over the cities and gave signals, calling upon the citizens to be ready for action. At about quarter to eight two aeroplanes flew over the cities again and made the last signal, asking us to switch off the lights, and within fifteen minutes the cities of Osaka and Kobe were plunged into darkness. Even the lights of trains, trams and cars were put out. During the period of action the traffic of the city was regulated by police with red and green torches, and every lane and street in the city was guarded by student-volunteers. At half past eight about a dozen aeroplanes came upon us all on a sudden and began to shower red bombs. At once the military cadets replied by anti-aircraft guns. And a while after a squadron of government aeroplanes appeared to fight out the enemy. This aerial battle was really very delightful. At ten the programme came to an end with the signal of the aeroplanes and the citizens' prayer, 'Lead, O' Lord,

from darkness unto light' was granted. The city was immediately lighted. The citizens acted strictly according to the instructions of the authorities. The demonstration was a unique success.

Osaka is a historical city, once the capital of Japan when it was known as Naniwa. In the heart of the city stands an old fort known as 'Osaka castle'. It stands surrounded by a high wall and a moat. At present one portion of the castle is occupied by the army while its other portion, which contains an art-museum in a four-storied wooden building, is open to the public.

On the 29th October I left the city for Nara. The distance is about thirty miles, but the first sixteen miles or so are plain while the rest are mountainous. There was a metalled road upto the foot of the mountain beyond which I found no track at all. Hence I took the railway and walked the distance up the mountains. It was evening when I reached Nara and put up in Nara Hotel. The charges were ten yens per day. It is the biggest hotel in the town, situated on a hill.

Nara is a small town. It spreads over several small hills. Its roads are unmetalled and dirty. The houses are small and lie congested. But its park called Nara Park and Daibutsu (the image of Buddha) attract visitors in hundreds and thousands. It was once the capital of Japan and it is here where came the Chinese and the Korean cultures first and got



mixed with the Japanese culture. Those cultures found their expression in art and they are still to be noticed on the architectural works in the shrines and temples here.

Nara Park which is so famous contains among others a Buddhist temple known as Todaiji temple, two museums and several ponds and gardens. But it is an attraction to the visitors more for its hundreds of deer. They flock round the visitors for eatables, and many of the visitors cannot resist the temptation of being snapped with them.

Todaiji temple is famous for the image of Buddha which happens to be the biggest image of Buddha in sitting on earth. It is 54 feet high, wrought of cast metal in 760 A. D. One is required to pay ten sens for entrance. There is another important temple which is Horyuji temple, built in the 7th century A. D. It is said to be the oldest wooden building in existence in the world.

After passing one night and a half day in Nara I left for Osaka again in order to proceed to Kyoto the day following.

Kyoto is about forty miles from Osaka. The road is asphalted and runs over small hills and plains—all green with vegetation. On my arrival at the city I went direct to the Y. M. C. A. to put up there. Its secretary was good enough to arrange for my stay there, though they had no arrangements for accommodating guests.

Towards afternoon I set out to visit the Imperial palace. The admission into the palace is regulated by pass obtainable from the local branch of the Chamber of Commerce. As I reached the entrance of the palace with a pass, I was stopped by the guard and taken to the chief of the gate-office who declined to permit me to enter the palace on the plea that I was not in the full European costume; I was in scout-dress. The law is said to enjoin upon the visitors to come either in the full European costume or in the Japanese dress.

That evening I was invited by the Y. M. C. A. to speak to the students about my travels. There was a large gathering. I spoke for about an hour and a half firstly about my adventures and then about socio-economic and political conditions of the countries I visited. After I had finished my talk, the secretary of the Y. M. C. A. rose and spoke a while in appreciation of my adventurous spirit. After the meeting was over, when I retired to my room for rest, some fifty students if not more, both boys and girls, came in to take my autograph. Really I felt amused to see them so much interested in my autograph. However, I satisfied them. After they had departed, two more gentlemen came in. One of them was Mr. Roy, the student whom I had met in the agricultural farm of Akasi. He came here to prosecute higher studies, so I was told, on the same subject in the Imperial University of Kyoto. He made a request that I should

accompany them to the lake Biwa early in the following morning. I welcomed the proposal. And accordingly we three started in the twilight next morning. There is an asphalted road running over the hills. It was so tiring to cycle this way. It took us nearly four hours to reach the lake, a distance of only ten miles. The lake is the biggest in Japan, situated amidst a lovely surrounding of mountains. In the heart of the lake has sprung up an island where stands a big hotel. And beside the lake has grown up a small town, so beautiful to look at ! It has a good number of dancing-halls and tea-houses which afford so much pleasure and comforts to the lake-visitors. And for pleasure-trips round the lake there are small steamers.

On our journey back we stopped for a while before a military school to witness the parade and the rifle-practice of the young military cadets, reaching the city at about two. A little while after I received invitations to visit the offices of two leading newspapers. In both the places I was warmly received and entertained with tea. The dailies have circulation over one lac and a half each.

Kyoto is the fourth largest city in Japan, the population being over a million. It has spacious roads and palatial buildings. It is a favourite place of the tourists and visitors of Japan. A little over one thousand years ago, during the reign of Emperor Kammu, it became the capital of the country and it maintained its dignity and position until the beginning

of the Meiji era. It is famous for what is called Nishijin fabrics which are required for gorgeous *Kiomonos* of the fair sex.

After two days here I proceeded to Nagaya. The distance is some one hundred miles. The road runs over the hills, and then it was not so good. Naturally, therefore, I met with considerable difficulty in cycling along this way. But it was a relief that I found restaurants and hotels in many of the villages I came across. The villages of Japan are closely situated, and then small towns occur at short distances. Indeed, village-life in Japan is more comfortable than town-life, because one finds almost all the amenities of town-life amidst the calm and quiet atmosphere of a village. The dailies reach him the same day and he can listen to radio-broadcasts from a village-home. He finds electric light too in the village. In many villages tea-houses and dancing-halls add to the comforts of the villagers.

When I say Japan, I mean its Honshu island, the largest island extending over an area of 87,500 sq. miles, which is the home of the bulky majority of the people of Japan. But in reality Japan consists of more than four thousand islands, some inhabited and some not. Of the islands four are big, situated close to one another. They are Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu. Slight earthquake tremors are said to be always perceptible by seismographs. Unfortunately the country falls victim to a terrible catastrophe within

every half a century. One such occurred in 1855 and another in 1891. In 1896 about 27,000 persons died in the Sanriku upheaval. But of all the most terrible was the earthquake and fire of 1923 which destroyed most parts of Tokyo, Yokohama and their surrounding localities. About one lac and half souls perished. The wails and cries of the unlucky Japanese still ring in many a ear. I know not if any such terrible earthquake has ever occurred in the world.

Typhoon is another menace to Japan. It visits her every year and causes immense damage to limb and life of the people. Otherwise, Japan is a lovely country whose natural beauty is simply alluring and climate most bracing. Why does this land of cherry blossoms which is so much favoured by the Rising Sun fall a victim so often to the wrath of the god of destruction? Who knows when his wrath will cool down!

During summer the days are very hot, but the nights are quite cold. But in winter the country gets terribly cold. And then mild showers accompany blizzards which make it doubly cold and unbearable. The people can't live without fire-stoves in their houses and it is difficult for one to come out of doors due to cold even if he puts on woollen clothes upon clothes. He can hardly stand the severity of cold until he puts on a garment made of wool and leather (wool inside and leather outside) which does not allow the cold wind to penetrate. Hokkaido being in the extreme

north, it experiences snow-fall first of all. It occurs in November while in Tokyo snow begins to fall in December.

The Japanese are short in stature and they look healthy. They have heavy face and flat nose. Both the sexes wear *Kiimonos* and wooden sandals with high heels and it is the national costume of the Japanese. It is too loose a garment. It contains pockets in its sleeves. The people look upon their costume with a scientist's eyes and they can quickly change and adapt themselves to a new order however revolutionary it may be. And it is why they have been able to adopt the European costume so easily and within so short a time. Things should always be judged on their merits. One should see if his costume makes him active and smart and suits the climate. If it does not, why should he stick to that? He should adopt a new one. It involves no question of nationalism or internationalism. One should always be ready to receive which helps him and shun which does not. The Japanese have imbibed that sort of spirit. To-day every man in Japan wears the European costume when at work. But at home they wear their own costume.

The government of Japan have enforced the uniformity of dress in every sphere—a thing which draws my sincere admiration. I have found such uniformity of dress nowhere else in the world. Every male student in Japan, whether a school-student or a university-student,

and every teacher and professor has to wear a costume of one colour and style. It consists of shoes, trousers, coat and hat—all black. Likewise, the girl students all over Japan have to wear the same kind of costume. Similarly the people of different professions have their respective costumes to wear. And the people are not averse to it. The girl students have to bob hair, though the ladies are very fond of long hair which they artistically dress. They are so fond of it that they buy tufts of long hair, if they have not, for the purpose. They use not even pillows, lest their dressed hair be spoilt. They use a piece of wood under neck when they sleep.

The houses in Japan are built of wood and sometimes the roofs are tiled. In cities and towns the walls of many a house are plastered and white-washed which make them decent-looking. The floors of the rooms in the houses are matted and the occupants do not enter them with shoes which they allow to rest at the entrance of the house. They are clean by nature. When they walk, they do not generally spit except in the dust-bins.

Rice is the staple food of the people. They are fond of different items of food ; fish forms the principal item. They are so very fond of fish that they can take hardly a meal without it. Many people eat even live fish with hot rice which, I was told, they much relish. Salt fish they like too much. Salt radish is another important item of their food. Like many



other people the Japanese too do not relish spices in curries. They use bean oil. Often they do not take the trouble of cooking every day. They take food even two or three days old. The food does not get worse simply because of cold climate. But it is pleasing to note that the Japanese throw away the chau-sticks after every meal.

The people do not drink milk except on rare occasions and there are many who have tasted cow's milk never in their lives. They like fruits very much, but, how peculiar, they do not eat mangoes. Many complain of a bad odour in it. Maybe, it is like 'grapes are sour.' Mango does not grow in Japan. They are trying for its cultivation, but their attempt has met with little success so far.

The same day in the evening I reached Nagaya after a long tedious journey. I had to move about an hour to and fro to discover the address of one Mr. Kasauga, a Japanese, whom I had met in Kobe and who had invited me to put up with him in his house. None could give me the right direction. Some showed this way and some that way. Luckily, I met at last a student who knew my friend. He kindly took me to the address. When Mr and Mrs. Kasauga saw me getting down at their door, they came forward immediately and received me most cordially. The lady had no difficulty to know me at the very first sight; because she knew that I would be coming to their house.

They took me to the upper flat of the house and without any delay treated me with tea, after which I went down for bath. I took my meal early and retired to bed within half an hour after dinner. I was feeling quite at home here.

It was a two-storied building. Its rooms were mattressed. The ground-floor was kept exclusively for their office. The upper floor contained four spacious rooms, each of which was decorated with pictures and artificial flowers, and except these there was nothing in the rooms ; not even the bed-clothes could be seen in the bedroom. They were kept in a small chamber. The people of Japan never sleep during day. And so when my Japanese friends saw me sleeping by day, they laughed and said : 'You are a lazy chap, we see !'

Next morning I set out accompanied by my host to visit the city. It is the third largest city in Japan, the population being a little over one million and fifty thousand. It is nearly as big as Calcutta. This city too contains two shopping streets which are illuminated every evening with lights of multifarious colours. They present lovely pictures. The streets abound in bars and cafes, dancing-halls and cinema-houses. The most important place in the city is the castle which stands surrounded by a high wall and a moat. Inside the castle there is one five-storied wooden building built about five centuries ago. It is still in good condition. From the roof of this building the whole city of Nagaya can be distinctly seen.

After lunch Mr. Kasauga received two telephone calls from two leading newspapers and he promised on my behalf to pay them visit towards the evening. One of the papers is *Nagaya Shimbun* whose daily circulation is about one lac. The other is *Sing Aichi Shimbun*. Its circulation is over one lac and half daily. In both the places I was warmly received and treated to refreshment, which over, I was snapped with Mr. Kasauga who accompanied me. Then we were taken round the different departments. Though ignorant of their language, I had no difficulty to feel to talk with the editors and their staff, because I found a good interpreter in my esteemed friend, Mr. Kasauga. It was really a delightful evening.

Shortly after our return home from the press my friend got an express telegram from a friend of his in another city. Immediately he left the city, leaving me in the care of his wife. Mrs. Kasauga was a genial lady. After dinner she took me to a cinema where an American film was running.

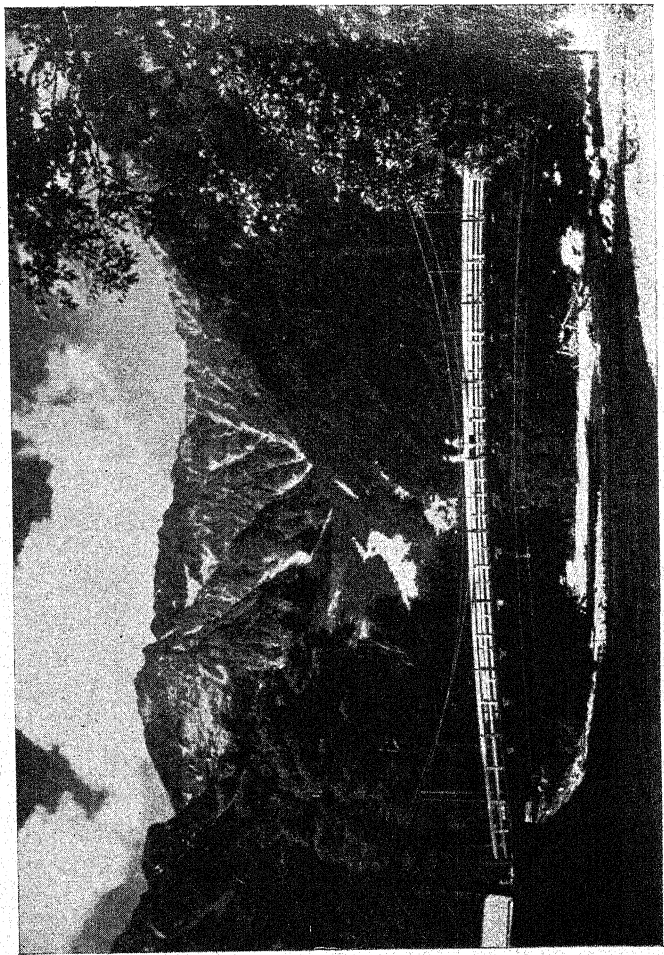
After three days I started for Yokohama, a distance of nearly two hundred miles. It was the 6th November. The road runs across the hills and plains, villages and towns and somewhere along the sea-coast.

The same day in the evening I halted at a wayside village. By this time I managed to learn a little Japanese and it helped me a great deal in the villages where I would seldom find an English-knowing person.

Joint-family system prevails in this country too. Indeed, amongst the educated there are many who do not see eye to eye with the advocates of that system. Naturally, therefore, they prefer to live separately when they have means. In a joint family the members have to be large-hearted ; otherwise, petty things lead to quarrels among the members and the domestic peace and harmony is disturbed. Then, this system makes the people less active and self-reliant and it is a check on one's growth economically and otherwise. Of course, there are certain advantages too in this system.

In the Japanese families the relation between the members and the servants is simply exemplary. It is based not on the sense of superiority and inferiority, but on love. Generally the servants in the Japanese families are all girls. The maid is always looked upon as a member of the family and she is treated likewise. She sits and takes her meals with the family-members on the same table. Even the master and the mistress of the family treat her most courteously. When they require her to do something, they request her and not order as we do. As in the family, so outside the people behave so mildly and courteously. They work more and talk less. Seldom does a rowdy scene come to notice in the country.

The language of the people is Japanese, but they have no characters of their own to write their language. They write Chinese characters. And so



A lovely scene, Kami Kochi, Japan Alps





when a Japanese speaks to a Chinese, the latter does not understand the former, but when the former writes, the latter understands. It is because the words bear the same meaning. Take for an example—water. The Japanese call it *mizu* while the Chinese call it *sui*, but both of them have to write the same character to mean that, and so they understand each other. At present the Japanese are adopting two kinds of alphabets to write their language. They are *Hira-kana* and *Kata-kana*. Both of them contain forty-eight alphabets each. But even with these ninety-six alphabets the Japanese cannot write what they want without the help of the Chinese characters. *Hira-Kana* and *Kata-kana* alphabets have been introduced in all schools and colleges of Japan. I have been told that they have to use at least three thousand Chinese characters besides their own to write their language. It is a hard job, indeed. In my opinion, Japan would do very well by introducing Roman alphabets. It would save the tremendous loss of energy and time of the people in learning their own mother-tongue.

Almost everyone in this land of Rising Sun knows how to read and write. Compulsory education has been adopted for the young boys and girls between six and fourteen. So the present student community forms 20% of the total population of the country. English is taught in the high schools. Education is imparted through their mother-tongue.



The system of education in the primary and secondary schools is the best I have ever seen. Co-education has been introduced in them. Before the classes sit to work, the students have to sing in chorus their national anthem. During school hours the teachers speak to the students about the glorious history and the lives of great men and heroes of their country in the form of stories, and they are also kept informed of the daily events in their country and abroad. Then, on some particular days of the week the teachers take the students to the factories, shrines and temples and historical places. At intervals they take them on pleasant excursions too. It is really a very delightful sight when the young boys and girls in their uniforms march with their teachers to the places of interest and education. This system of education has a great educative value, and besides that, it brings them an unbounded joy and makes them feel as comrades and they learn discipline at the very prime of life.

Physical exercise is a compulsory subject in the schools, and so every student, be it a boy or a girl, has to go through the courses. The relation between the teacher and the taught is very sweet. Not a single piece of cane can be found in any school. The guilty students even are not caned. Teachers and students mix as friends and often they indulge in innocent jokes, of course, outside, but at school the students pay the teachers their due respect and seldom are they guilty of indiscipline. Often the teachers are

found to escort the young students to their respective homes.

Almost every school contains technical departments and it affords the students some facilities to take up the subjects of their choice which might help them later to earn their living. Even a washerman in Japan has to study about his art in a school and pass an examination, so that he can develop the art and manage his business more efficiently. How all-embracing is the system of education in Japan ! In the colleges the military education is compulsory.

The overwhelming majority of the people are Buddhists. Buddhism came to Japan in about 552 A.D. from China through Korea, but before Buddhism was introduced, Japan had her own religion called Shintoism. It teaches to worship nature and ancestors. It believes, if I mistake not, that the spirits of the dead are promoted to the rank of gods and goddesses. The people say that they have as many as eight hundred gods and goddesses and they hold that they all are the descendants of Izanagino-Mykoto and Izanamino-Mykoto, god and goddess.

Towards the middle of the 3rd century A. D. Confucianism came and after about two hundred years when Buddhism came, a conflict took place among the three systems of teachings, namely, Buddhism, Confucianism and Shintoism. And after a protracted struggle peace was established. Buddhism became the religion of Japan. Confucianism remained

there to mould the life and character of the people, and Shintoism occupied the domain of ceremonies. And this system still holds good. It is a queer mixture of the three teachings. At present there are some Christians in the country.

Between Nagaya and Yokohama I took two halts—one in that village and the other in Atami, a small town, one of the best health-resorts in Japan. Atami is situated on a lovely site on a hill facing the sea. Its natural scenery, its hot springs and bracing climate—all together attract like a magnet hundreds and thousands of tourists, sightseers and patients from far and near.

After a day's halt here I proceeded to Yokohama, a distance of about forty miles. It did not take me long to cover this distance. The first night in Yokohama I passed in the Yokohama Hotel. The charges were high and so I had to move to the Y. M. C. A. the following morning. It is a big building situated opposite the Yokohama Park.

The Indian residents of the city number about one hundred. Almost all of them except a very few are businessmen, most of whom are big export-merchants. They all are wealthy people, mostly hailing from Sind and Guzrat.

The Indians in the city were very happy to see me and they held a meeting to receive me publicly. In the meeting they presented me a purse in appreciation of my adventurous spirit and to encourage me

to make my ambition a success. The meeting over, I was happy to get introduced to one Mr. Sinha, belonging to my province. On the eve of our parting he invited me to stay with him in Tokyo.

Yokohama stands sixth amongst the cities of Japan. It contains as many as 6,20,296 souls. It has beautiful avenues—spacious, neat and clean. It has two nice parks, one of which is the Harbour Park—that lovely park facing the sea. There is a large number of cafes and bars, cinema-houses and dancing-halls here. Trams and buses run all throughout the city.

Few names other than that of Yokohama are more familiar to the foreigners, but it was an obscure village even in 1853 when Commodore Perry visited it. Amazingly it has developed into so big a city. When it was fast prospering, occurred the disastrous earthquake and fire of 1923 which completely razed it. And on its debris the present city has sprung up. Its harbour is one of the most beautiful of its kind in the world. It is big too. Its breakwater is 9400 feet long. The quays and piers have the capacity of mooring as many as twenty-one ocean-liners while buoys and docks can accommodate thirty-three vessels if not more.

November 11. At dawn I left the city for Kamakura, a neighbouring town at a distance of only six miles. The road was not good. It was unmetalled besides being narrow. Japan can boast of many things, but not of roads which are worse in many respects than the roads in our country.

With some difficulties I went on along this way up and down the hills. And on the way I met with a little accident. As I was turning round a bend while going down a hill near Kamakura, I suddenly slipped into a ditch. I could not rise up without the help of a traveller accidentally passing by the way. Fortunately I got no severe wound except some bruises here and there on my body. After some rest I resumed my journey, and on reaching the city I went first to a doctor and got my wounds dressed. Thereafter I proceeded to visit the Kumakura Shrine, famous for its architecture. It is one of the oldest shrines in Japan, dedicated to an emperor. A shrine contains no image; it is dedicated to the spirit of a deceased. The famous Daibutsu is another attraction. The image of Buddha in sitting (42 feet and 6 inches high and 97 feet in circumference) is the second largest in Japan, the largest being that of Nara; but it excels the latter in fine artistic works. It dates back to the thirteenth century. The house which enshrined the image was twice destroyed by tidal waves and since then it has remained in the open, but it has suffered no damage yet. Thousands of devotees come here everyday to pay their devotion. The temple of Hase-No-Kwannon stands close by. It contains a huge wooden image of Kwannon, the goddess of mercy. It requires only five paces to enter the temple. Near this temple is the Entakuji temple, famous for its huge bell, 8 ft. in height, 4 ft. 7 inches in diameter and 6 inches in thickness.

It happens to be the oldest and largest bell in Japan.

Kamakura stands surrounded by hills and looks very beautiful, but the town is not so neat and clean. Its roads are not asphalted. Though a very small town, it has trams and buses.

Once it was a flourishing city inhabited by more than half a million souls and it became the capital of the country for quite a good long time.

After a brief halt at Kamakura I resumed my journey to go to Enoshima. Enoshima lies in the outskirts of Kamakura. Opposite Enoshima stands a lovely wooded island ; I know not why it is called 'wooded island'. It is some three-fourths of a mile from the shore. It is about one mile and half in circumference. It is connected with the mainland by a wooden bridge. A toll of two sens only is required to go over the bridge. The chief attraction of the island is the 'Dragon Cave' which was, the legend says, the abode of a dragon, and which now enshrines an image of Bente, the goddess of luck. Except it the island contains several other shrines and temples. But the foreign visitors are attracted more by its natural scenery which is simply marvellous.

It is one of the few beauty-spots of Japan, always crowded with sea-bathers and sightseers. And those willing to stay can find here high class hotels and restaurants. From Enoshima it looks most lovely.



Enoshima is a small town, situated at a charming spot, but its dirty roads and congested houses have robbed it much of its charm. In fact, it has little fascination but for the island.

At dusk I returned to Yokohama and started for Tokyo the following morning after breakfast. While cycling in full speed along the smooth asphalted road, I was suddenly stopped by two youngmen. For a moment I became a little nervous, but I got over it when they came to me, begged pardon for their discourtesy and told that they were pressmen, following me to catch from a distance of some three miles. They asked me a series of questions, some by gestures and some in broken English,—all regarding my ownself. I could not help smiling to see them attach so much importance to an ordinary person like myself. They brought their cameras too to snap me. It took them about half an hour to finish their business, after which I bade them good-bye with a smile to continue my journey onward.

The distance between Yokohama and Tokyo is not great; it is only one and half hours' journey by cycle. The road runs through small towns and no village occurs on the way. The road seems to be running from one part of a city to the other. It is difficult to distinguish between the towns.

As I reached the city of Tokyo, I became utterly perplexed to see its heavy traffic and vastness. I began to proceed very cautiously. It became



extremely difficult for me to locate the address of Mr. Sinha in so vast a city. I could not understand which direction I should now go. I asked several persons about the address, but they could not be of any help to me. At last I met an amiable youngman who kindly offered his service at my disposal. He went with me upto the address, a distance of some five miles from where I met him. Needless to say, he had my heartiest thanks and gratitude.

As I tapped at the door, it opened and came out a Japanese lady to receive me most cordially in the perfect Indian style. She was a lady of not more than probably twenty-four years, looking smart and sweet. She was the wife of Mr. Sinha, a fellow-countryman of mine, whom I had met in Yokohama and who had invited me to stay with him. She was ever attentive to my comforts. I stayed with them only four days and then moved to 'Asia Lodge', the only Indian boarding-house in Tokyo. Charges here are very moderate—only twenty-five yens for a student and thirty for a non-student per month. There lived two Javanese students besides several Indians. I had a very nice time here. It is managed by Mr. Rash Behary Bose, the famous Indian revolutionary, who has now made this country his home. He is a Japanese subject. Financially he is now well off. Still he does a good deal for introducing our fast-changing country to the enlightened society of Japan. He is held in high esteem by many of his countrymen, but he seems to be obsessed with a sense of vanity.

Here in this city I met also Raja Mahendra Pratap, a great patriot and a genial personality, who had been living an exile's life for many long years past. I was so happy to be acquainted with him. A few years ago he founded an association called 'World-Federation' with the aim and object of establishing peace in this world of warring, unhappy nations by uniting all the diverse religions and cultures. And for propagating his views on the subject he used to publish a monthly organ and hold a meeting every Sunday at his residence. On an invitation I attended a special meeting of the said association held to send greetings to Philippine on the occasion of the inauguration of its Commonwealth. The gathering was small, consisting of Indians, Chinese and Japanese. I also spoke in this meeting. I dwelt at length on the merits and demerits of the constitution and particularly on the political struggle that had preceded the inauguration of the Commonwealth. The meeting over, I was happy to be introduced to one Chinese Christian, a student in the Imperial University of Tokyo. Following a short conversation when I stood up to take leave of him, he requested me earnestly to be so good as to have my tea with him next evening. He was one Mr. Peter Ching. During my short stay in the city we became close friends and quite unconsciously developed a weakness for each other.

After a long evening walk one day I felt fatigued and so to refresh myself entered a tea-house and took

my seat on a fine cushioned bench. Promptly a cup of tea was served together with some Japanese cakes. Japanese cakes are not so good to taste.

Soon came in two girls beautifully dressed in gorgeous *kimonos* and chose their seats by me. Then they began conversation with me in broken English, in course of which they asked me if I required the services of a geisha. The geishas are Japanese dancing girls who entertain the guests with songs and dances. They can be classified into three. I have been told that the geishas belonging to the last two classes are no better than prostitutes. The social outlook of the people of Japan is quite different from that of most of the people of other nations. Most of them do not consider what is called illicit love as a grave moral offence and many do not mind anything at all if one goes to a brothel. But by this I don't mean to say that most of the Japanese are immoral in the sense many people understand.

One afternoon while reading a newspaper on the flat roof of our lodge, I suddenly noticed ashes falling on me and all around. I could not understand what the matter was. It remained shrouded in mystery till the next morning when we came to learn from the newspapers that there occurred a volcanic eruption in the Mount Aso which contains the largest volcano in Japan. The diameter of the crater is said to be over ten miles. So violent was the eruption that the

ashes were blown away to Tokyo, a distance of some eighty miles, and further down.

While in Tokyo, and elsewhere too, I came in touch with many political associations and had the opportunity of discussing with them the different problems of the day, particularly politics. And from discussions I found that many people, mostly young and students, had a leaning towards socialism. But they have little hold over the masses. Nor are they properly organised all over the country. Most of them are not so revolutionary and they do not like to break away with their past. What many of them aim at is a sort of socialist government with their beloved emperor on the throne, though monarchism and socialism go ill together. In Japan there is at present no monarchism in the sense we understand. Though the emperor of Japan is all-powerful and he can do anything and everything, being the supreme authority of the country, he always acts like a constitutional monarch. The emperor of Japan and the emperors of other countries can hardly be placed on the same footing; because the emperor of Japan is not merely a king to the people, he is their God. And so he has to keep himself away from public gaze. He does not appear in public except on a very rare occasion. His life remains shrouded in mystery; no one knows anything about his daily life. When he passes through a street on any official occasion, the people do not stay in their buildings. They think

that they cannot stay above their king, the God-personified. They come down. Many do not even like to have a glimpse of him. How can they look at so holy a person, their God, with so sinful eyes,—they ask. Therefore their king is above criticism. Their outlook in this respect has undergone no change yet, though Japan has been greatly influenced by the Western civilisation. There is nothing in this world which they cannot do for their king and in his name. They can murder their friends and wives, even themselves, not to speak of murdering others. They can be brutes for him.

There have been revolts against the Government several times ; even the Cabinet-ministers were murdered, but the revolts were not against the king. The reason of the last military revolt which resulted in the murder of several Cabinet-ministers seems to be that the leaders were not competent enough to carry out the military programme which, it is said, included the conquest of Manchuria, Outer Mongolia, Asiatic Russia and China. And with the man and wealth power of China the authors of the programme wanted to drive further westward and desired to turn all the Whites and the Reds out of the Far East and to make Japan the sole mistress of the Pacific and the Far East. This is said to be the military programme of Japan for twenty-five years. The elder statesmen, though they were partially successful, were quite incompetent to carry out the major portion of the programme ; because, owing to their old age they probably lost

their what is called vigour and energy and ruthless optimism born of youth. Indeed, they also were seeking opportunities to carry out the programme, but the young militarists grew too impatient of the policy of 'wait and seek opportunity'. And so they made a strong protest against the policy by assassinating the elder statesmen. Their protest yielded a result in their favour and the young militarists are now pushing ahead vigorously with their programme.

In the place of 'wait and seek opportunity' policy of the former statesmen they have now adopted the policy of 'create opportunity and push ahead with the programme vigorously'. And they have been successful upto now, but as regards the consequences of a possible attempt to implement their programme fully future alone can tell.

The Japanese are a determined people who know no retreat from any action even in the face of their complete annihilation. From top to bottom they are nationalists. Even many of the socialists who talk of internationalism so often are found to rejoice when comes to them a news of their victory in China. There are very few amongst the Japanese who are sincere internationalists and who look at things from that standpoint. In my opinion there is not much difference between communalism and nationalism. If communalism is a crime, nationalism is worse. Because nationalism makes different nations antagonistic to one another and causes more bloodshed than communalism does.

If one cannot be an internationalist without being a nationalist first, how can one be a nationalist without being a communalist? After all, the world consists of different nations, but a country may not contain different communities. Therefore nationalism is as much a sin to the world of different nations as communalism is to a country inhabited by peoples of different communities. Both of them have either to be encouraged or discouraged for the ultimate good of the people.

Now-a-days many Japanese are heard to say that East is East and West is West. These are the words cleverly devised by them to appeal to the sentiments of all the eastern people for drawing the latter's sympathy in order to serve their selfish ends smoothly. Truly speaking, there is no difference between imperialist Europe and imperialist Asia.

Tokyo is the capital of Japan. According to the latest census the population of the city stands at 5,848,000, and it is the 3rd largest city in the world, the first two being London and New York. It spreads over an area of about two hundred and thirteen square miles. It consists of thirty-five districts. Formerly it was called Edo—a name derived from Edo-Taro who was the Commanding General of an army of Shogun Minamoto Yoritomo who chose this place for his headquarters towards the end of the twelfth century. The Emperor Meiji removed the capital from Kyoto—meaning western capital—to this Edo and named it



'Tokyo'—meaning eastern capital. He completely reformed his government on the European model and it is he who is the maker of modern Japan. He is enshrined in the hearts of his countrymen as the greatest emperor of Japan.

The old city which contained fifteen districts is at present divided into two parts—Yamate and Shitamachi, meaning up-town and down-town. The former contains the residential quarters while the latter comprises the business districts where are located most of the factories and workshops. The central part of Tokyo was affected most by the earthquake and fire of 1923 and after the catastrophe the city fathers have built it on a new model.

Not very long ago a large number of villages in the outskirts of Tokyo were taken into the fold of the city, and the newly incorporated places are called Greater Tokyo. The city stands on several hills and so its roads and lanes run up and down. Besides trams and buses there is a net of electric railways over the city. The system of traffic regulation is also good. At every junction of roads there are green, yellow and red lights for the purpose.

Most of the houses in the city are small, built of wood. Of course, there are many huge buildings too, most of which stand on certain principal streets. Ginza, Kanda and Shinzuku are the three streets which are illuminated every evening with lights of multifarious colours. They wear a gay appearance

and allure hundreds and thousands of the citizens. On those streets stand mostly cinema-houses and dancing-halls, bars and cafes.

Here in this city lives the Emperor of Japan permanently. H. R. M. Hiro Shito happens to be the 124th descendant in the royal line which is said to have been ruling for long twenty-six centuries without any break and Japan is proud of that. The palaces spread over a vast area in the heart of the city, surrounded by high walls and a big moat always filled with water.

Besides several noted temples and shrines like Sengakuji temple and Meiji shrine the city has a number of parks and gardens well worth a visit. Of the parks Ueno Park is the biggest. It contains two museums and one zoo. The zoo is as big as that of Calcutta and it can boast particularly of its aquarium.

Meiji shrine is the most important of all shrines. It is dedicated to the emperor Meiji. It comprises several buildings built in pure Shinto style. The garden surrounding the shrine is full of big shady trees, looking like a forest. It seems to be a place far away from the din and bustle of the city. The shrine is one of the holiest places of pilgrimage in Japan, visited by thousands of people. Even H. R. M. the Emperor himself pays it a visit every year on the occasion of the national prayer in this shrine for peace of the souls of the dead soldiers.

But the most attractive of all is the war-museum. It contains a large collection of war-materials, such

as, rifles, guns and tanks. There are electric arrangements in the hall for the visitors to enjoy how the fighting 'planes are fired at with the anti-aircraft guns and how the soldiers attack the enemy and how they repulse the attack.

As I had an ardent desire to visit Russia, I approached the Soviet consul in Shanghai in China for a visa. In reply he asked me to apply through them to Moscow for the same, because the Soviet consuls were not then empowered to grant a visa to anyone. Accordingly I applied to Moscow for the same from Shanghai and requested the Government to be so good as to communicate their answer to me in Tokyo. After long four months I got their reply through their Embassy in Tokyo. It was a disappointing reply. However, I approached the Embassy again and this time for a transit-visa. A transit-visa permits the traveller only to pass through the country without breaking journey for long. As I could not obtain any visa for travelling in Russia, I made up my mind to go as far as Poland by the trans-continental railway through that country. But without a transit-visa I would not be able to pass through Russia. So, a transit-visa was indispensable, and the Russian consuls could grant such a visa, but unlucky as I was, I could not obtain this even, though they are morally bound to grant such visas to anyone and every one who wants to go beyond Russia by that railway. They pleaded inability to grant me the transit-visa in the face of the

reply of their Government in the negative to my request for a visa. At last they agreed to send a cable to Moscow for the same and I paid them fifteen yens—the charges for the cablegram. Now I became sure of having the transit-visa and I began to count hours and minutes for the reply. Meanwhile I bought woollen clothes worth about two hundred yens for standing the Siberian cold. But all my fond hopes were shattered by the reply from Moscow. Why they refused to grant me even the transit-visa is still a mystery to me. However, I now changed my programme and decided to sail for Philippine.

It was the 22nd November—the day of my sailing for Manila by s. s. President Jackson, a huge boat of 14000 tons. Early in the morning I left 'Asia Lodge', saying good-bye to all my friends who gathered there, and came to the main station of Tokyo to catch an electric train for Yokohama. Here also came several Chinese and Japanese friends of mine to see me off. Mr. Peter Ching was one of them. He accompanied me. It took us only half an hour to reach Yokohama. Immediately after our arrival we proceeded to the office of the Dollar Steamship Company for booking a 3rd class passage. Thereafter we went to a restaurant for lunch and thence to the Yokohama Park. Here we secured a nice place on a bench under some shady trees beside a fountain. We stayed in this park till evening when we moved to the Harbour Park. I was not in a very

cheerful mood now, because the thought of imminent separation from my friends and Japan—a country for which I developed a weakness unconsciously—occupied my mind and made me feel no happy. However, after some time we boarded the ship standing along the wharf. Soon the ship gave its last whistle and with it Mr. Peter Ching clasped my hand to say me good-bye. The time was up ; the boat left the pier without further delay, but we kept looking at each other until we disappeared amidst darkness that was falling fast on the landscape. I retired to bed with a heavy heart.

The boat had four classes, namely, 1st class, 2nd class, tourist class and 3rd class. The 3rd class too had cabins. The cabin wherein I was accommodated contained only two beds, one of which was occupied by a countryman of mine, a Sikh, who was returning home from the U. S. A. after a pretty long time. Most of the 3rd class passengers were Chinese and the rest were Filipinos and Japanese besides we two Indian souls.

Amongst my new acquaintances in the boat there was a young Filipino girl who was a student in the U. S. A. From top to bottom she was Americanised and lost all the beauties of an Oriental girl. I found her always busy either with her hair or in using a lip-stick and beautifying her cheeks. As regards my own self, I began to kill time sometimes by chatting with my fellow-passengers and sometimes by reading

books and playing chess. There was a small library in the ship for the 3rd class passengers.

Enroute to Philippine our boat touched at Kobe, Shanghai and Hongkong and therefore I had an opportunity to see my old friends there again. Needless to say, they were dam glad to find me back in their midst for a while.

## PHILIPPINE

December 2. This day we reached the waters of Manila Bay after ten days of monotonous voyage in the Pacific which is in no way pacific, and we were so happy. From early morning we began to eagerly wait to sight Manila. A faint dark line of a range of high mountains around the Bay came to our sight. Many battle-ships with American flags flying at high masts were found here and there in this small Bay.

Towards afternoon the boat reached the harbour and stood along the pier No. 7, a two-storied building, said to be the biggest of its kind in the world. Meanwhile the passport officers came aboard the ship and called all the foreign passengers to appear before them in the 1st class smoking room. After examining the passports they granted permits for landing to all the passengers except fifty of us, mostly Chinese, who were the new comers to this land. We accompanied them guarded by armed police to the immigration office. There we were put into a small, dark and ill-ventilated room in which there was nothing to sit on. It is difficult to describe how nasty it was. Perhaps the immigration authorities of Manila took the 3rd class passengers as menials; otherwise how could they treat them so shabbily? We had, however, not to stay there long. Soon we were removed to another place and this time to the deten-



tion camp in an island, not very far from Manila. On our arrival there we were asked to sit in a line, at which I raised my voice of protest and refused to stand up and sit down according to their whims. At once the officer separated me from my fellow-passengers. But happily enough I was not subjected to further punishment for disobeying their order, though I was quite ready for that.

The detention camp was a two-storied building. It had several big halls besides a few small rooms, but they all were nasty. At about nine I was called for my dinner, but I lost my appetite as soon as I saw the dishes of so sumptuous a dinner for me! Just hear what it contained. Item No. 1—a plate of cold rice, No. 2—two pieces of uncooked, dry fish, No. 3—one banana. And for this food I was asked to pay forty centavos (100 centavos=1 peso=about ₱ 1/8as.). I refused with contempt to take the food, though I paid the bill. For the night I was provided with a cot and a piece of thin blanket. When I asked them for another piece of blanket for the cold night, they refused to comply with my request, remarking that one piece of blanket was enough for a 3rd class passenger. I resented their remark and it took us to the verge of a scuffle.

Early next morning all of us were taken again to the immigration office and there I lodged a protest against the ill-treatment I received the previous night at the hands of the clerks of the detention camp, but

the immigration authorities seemed to be quite indifferent to me. However, a while after the immigration commission examined my passport and granted me the permit to land. Then suddenly appeared there a gentleman, smartly dressed in European costume, and demanded from me some twenty-five pesos for the labour he had done for me as a lawyer. I refused to pay him even a single centavo and told him plainly that I had engaged no lawyer to plead my case before the immigration commission. At this he reported the matter to the said commission who immediately called me back and cancelled the permit they had given me. Then they sent me to rot in the dark cell. After sometime they told me that they could permit me to land on one's surety. Being helpless I now rang up Dr. D. N. Roy, a countryman of mine, then a professor in the Manila University, and asked him if he would be so kind as to stand surety for me, but, regretfully to say, he flatly refused to help me in any way. I fell to thinking as to what I should do now when came the said lawyer to see me again. He told me that everything would have gone smoothly, had I paid him that amount of money. In the face of the difficulties I agreed this time to his proposal and paid him then and there the amount of twenty-five pesos (about forty rupees), and I became free. Thereafter he departed to share the booty with the officers of the immigration commission and I left for Gurudwara on Isaac Peral Street.

The gurudwara has a two-storied building, built at a cost of some thirty-six thousand pesos. The upper flat of the building is used as the prayer-hall and the ground-floor is for free accommodation of the guests. They can have their grub too free. Most of the Sikhs in Manila are watchmen and very poorly paid, but still they contribute very liberally towards the maintenance of this huge establishment. Every Sunday almost all the Sikhs with their family-members assemble here in this gurudwara to pray and discuss matters connected with the interest of their community and country. After prayer rich *prosadam* is distributed. In one such Sunday meeting I was presented a purse on behalf of the Sikhs who appreciated my enterprise very highly. I was presented another purse in this city and that purse I got from the businessmen, mostly Sindhees. The Indians in the city number about three hundred. Except a few all are Sindhees and Punjabees.

The same day of my arrival some pressmen called on me at my place. They talked with me for a good long time firstly on my travels and adventures and then on the present-day politics, in the course of which they asked me a series of questions regarding the manifold activities of Tagore and Gandhi. They enquired of me about the health of Mahatmaji which was causing anxieties at that time. Mahatmaji and Tagore are widely known and held in high esteem by the people of Philippine. Gandhiji's heart and character appeals to the people more than his brain while it is

quite the opposite in case of our Tagore who is known and respected more as a thinker.

Here also as in other countries the press and the public received me most cordially and treated me most hospitably. I was always treated differently from other casual visitors and for this I owe them thanks and gratitude.

The following day I was happy to meet several Indian students who came to my place to congratulate me. One of them was Mr. Soban Singh, a post-graduate student, founder of the International Students' Federation in Manila. He was a sociable youngman of broad outlook. He was born and brought up in that country where his father had been living for many long years past. I was really very delighted to be acquainted with such a youngman of our country who had placed himself in the frontest rank among the students.

Manila has the distinction of being the capital of Philippine for many centuries past. Its present population is about three lacs and it is the largest city in this country. It stands on the west coast of the Luzon island and at the mouth of the Pasig which has fallen into the Bay. Its moderate climate and lovely scenery attract thousands of foreign tourists every year. It is here where took place the battle of 1898 between the Americans and the Spaniards who had been ruling the country for several hundred years past. In that battle luck turned in favour of the Americans and it marked the beginning of a new era in Philippine.

During the Spanish rule it was a small town surrounded by a high wall. Only a few thousand souls inhabited the town. The churches and the government buildings are still there to remind the people of the tyranny of the Spaniards. The present city has sprung up outside the wall and its roads are metalled, wide and clean. The principal business locality in the city is Escolta where are to be found prominent firms, banks and offices, cinema-houses and dancing-halls. This place remains always crowded with peoples of different nationalities in so many kinds of fashionable costumes.

The city is divided into two by the river Pasig which looks no bigger than a canal. There are several bridges over it. For communication in the city there are trams, taxis and calesas. Taxi here is generally a three-wheeled car and its charge is very low, within the reach of even the poor people. Calesa is a two-wheeled horse-cart. Its charge also is very low—only five centavos or so for half a mile.

Manila is a cosmopolitan city both in its appearance and population. It is the biggest educational centre in this country. There are many foreign students here. The city can boast of several things of importance, such as, zoo, museum, aquarium and botanical gardens. The zoo is small, but the aquarium is well worth a visit. The museum and the botanical gardens are not so big. Of all places in the city the best is the Luneta Park which lies facing the Bay. It is a park spreading over a large area. Several flower-gardens

have added to its beauty. The public can enjoy orchestra here once in every week. At dusk when the sun sets behind the distant hills and the war-ships in the Bay wear light, what a charming scenery it presents ! Here in the heart of this park stands the statue of late Dr. Jose Rezal who was shot down to death on the 30th December in 1896 by the Spaniards, the then ruler of their destinies. Dr. Rezal is enshrined in the hearts of his countrymen as the greatest patriot. His death-story makes really very pathetic reading. He was implicated in a conspiracy against the Government. He was tried by a court-martial for sedition and rebellion and was condemned to death. Accordingly he was taken to Luneta, the said place, in the early hours of the morning of the 30th December and shot down. The following is a portion of the moving poem he wrote immediate before his death :—

“I die while dawn’s rich iris are  
    Staining yet the sky,  
Heralds of the freer day still hidden from view  
Behind the night’s dark mantle. And should  
    The morning nigh  
Need crimson, shed my heart’s blood quickly,  
    Freely let it dye  
The new-born light with the glory of its  
    Ensanguined hue”.

But it is said that he was falsely implicated in the conspiracy, because the Government wanted to anyhow get rid of him, the greatest personality of the country.

Dr. Rezal was not only a great surgeon and a scientist, but also a poet and a novelist, a sculptor and a linguist of great repute. He had his university-education in Spain and travelled far and wide for propagating for his country. On his return home from Europe in 1892 after a long absence he founded a political organisation called 'La Liga Filipina'. He was then thirty one. When the Government came to know of the birth of this organisation, they took it as an attempt of the people for overthrowing the Government, though it had no such revolutionary aim. He was, however, arrested and exiled without any delay. Meanwhile another association was formed by some revolutionaries who elected him its president, it is said, without his knowledge. The following are said to have been its aims and objects : (a) Equality among all people, (b) The oppressor should be resisted and the oppressed be aided, (c) Womanhood should be respected, (d) Every member must fight for independence. The founder of this organisation was one Mr. Andres Bonifacio. After four years of its existence the police discovered this organisation which was followed by severe repression over the people. Its members were immediately rounded up. Some of them were sent to prison and some were executed. As luck would have it, only two weeks before the discovery of the said organisation Dr. Rezal came back to Manila from Mindanao, where he was in exile, for catching a boat for Spain in order to go to Cuba for serving as a



surgeon in a Spanish hospital there. He obtained necessary permission for that from the authorities, but he was arrested for his alleged connection with the organisation and court-martialled before he sailed. And thus ended the brilliant career of one who kindled the desire for freedom in many a heart of his countrymen. Every year his death-anniversary is celebrated with due solemnity. Since 1935—the year which saw the establishment of the Commonwealth in Philippine—the death-anniversary day has been a national holiday. On this day people in hundreds and thousands assemble at the foot of the statue of their great leader to pay their silent tributes of love and respect. The soldiers and the scouts march past him with bands playing and give a silent salute of honour to their beloved.

Philippine was somewhat independent until 1570 A. D. when one Mr. Goiti, a Spanish navigator, came and conquered Manila. The Spaniards ruled the country till 1898 when the U. S. A. snatched it away. The Spanish rule in Philippine was a reign of terror. The people hated it sincerely, and even to-day they tremble in fear and express their hatred when they talk of the Spanish tyranny. During their rule the lives of the people were not so safe, and malaria and so many other diseases were rampant in the country. It was almost uninhabitable. The roads were few and there was no proper communication-system. Over and above, the authorities were quite nonchalant in regard to the education of the people.

When the misrule of the Spaniards became intolerable, the discontent of the people burst forth like a bombshell. An armed conflict between the people and the Spaniards began and with amazing rapidity it spread out. It occurred in 1892. At about the same time the people of Cuba too revolted against their Spanish master. It was a strange coincidence. As a result of the revolt of the Cubans the U.S.A. suffered a great economic loss—a loss which she wanted the Spanish authorities to make good. But the latter scornfully turned down the proposal. The U. S. A. was indignant over it. Instead of conciliating her, Spain added another insult to her injury. They destroyed Maine, the U. S. A. battle-ship in the port of Havana. It added to the indignities of the U. S. A. Her patience collapsed and the fire flared up. She declared war against Spain and recognised the independence of Cuba. At the same time she ordered her naval forces in Hongkong to proceed to conquer Philippine. Accordingly they proceeded to Manila and a battle took place in the Bay, ending in favour of the U. S. A. In the naval battle the entire Spanish fleet was smashed to smithereens. The Filipino revolutionaries took advantage of this opportunity. They captured some places and proclaimed the 'Republic of Philippine' under the leadership of Mr. Aguinaldo who carried on a guerrilla war until they were annihilated by the U. S. A. forces. Being defeated in Manila Spain made a treaty with the U. S. A. and accor-

dingly recognised the independence of Cuba and handed over Philippine to her. In 1913 Mr. Francis Burton Harrison, the President of the U. S. A., assured the Filipinos in the following memorable words: "We regard ourselves as trustees, acting not for the advantage of U. S. A. but for the benefit of the people of the Philippine islands. Every step we take will be taken with a view to the ultimate independence of the islands and as a preparation of that independence, and we hope to move toward that end as rapidly as the safety and the permanent interests of the islands will permit. After each step taken experience will guide us to the next." The U. S. A. always tried to act according to her solemn promises and assurances, and only after thirty-seven years she gladly vested all her rights of administration in the Commonwealth Government of Philippine which was inaugurated on the 15th November, 1935. During the short American rule the country progressed fairly in all directions—socially, economically and politically.

The life of the Commonwealth Government is ten years, at the expiry of which the country will enjoy full freedom. But a rumour is afloat at present that Philippine will enjoy full independence much earlier. During the short period the new Government will have to organise various departments and particularly the army and the navy; because the U. S. A. will withdraw all her forces from the country after the said period. So they have taken the task in right



A Filipino girl in her  
national costume

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earnest. Military education has already been made compulsory for all able-bodied Filipinos, and many other measures are being taken for proper defence of the islands, but many Filipinos are afraid if they will be able to successfully withstand an onslaught of a first class military power without the assistance of the U. S. A. army and navy ; because Philippine cannot be expected to organise a big army and powerful air and naval forces simply because of her meagre income.

There are two political parties in the country which do not support the party in power at present. They are the Communist Party and the Sakdalista Party. The leader of the latter party is Mr. Ramos. He organised an armed revolt against the Government in May, 1935, but it was suppressed immediately. After the failure of his attempt he fled away to Japan and has been living there since. He made another unsuccessful attempt for an armed uprising against the Government towards the end of that year and this time from Japan. Many people consider him a tool in the hands of the Japanese militarists.

There are many Filipinos who apprehend an attack of their country by Japan. And so they look upon the Japanese settlers in the country with some suspicion. They number about fifty thousand. Many Filipinos apprehend that those Japanese might form an excuse for Japan's armed intervention. And it is why many of them do not favour their complete separation from America. But it is doubtful if the U. S. A. will



ever agree to go to war against Japan for Philippine—a country by which the U. S. A. is little benefited economically.

Like Japan Philippine also consists of some four thousand islands, but most of them are not inhabited. Of the islands the biggest is Luzon and the second biggest is Mindanao. But it is in Luzon where live the majority of the people of the country. The capital and almost all other big towns of Philippine are here. The country is said to have derived its name from Philip, son of Charles V, a king of Spain.

The islands enjoy a tropical climate, but it is tempered by sea-breeze which makes it enjoyable. The country gets frequent showers all round the year, though the monsoon period lasts from June to October, and during the monsoon period typhoon often visits the islands with all its rapacity and causes much destruction to lives and properties.

Among my acquaintances in Manila there was one Punjabee Hindu belonging to the depressed class who is still fresh in my memory. He came to me one day and requested me to visit his house in the outskirts of the city. As I was looking for such an opportunity to go to a village and have a talk with the poor villagers, I welcomed the proposal and agreed to his request. Accordingly he came to take me one early morning. From my place we started by a calesa, reaching the bus-stand about an hour after. We got a bus immediately. The distance between the bus-



stand and his village was ten miles or so. The road was poor; it was unsmooth and unmetalled. So, the journey was a bit trying to us. It took us nearly half an hour to reach the village and we alighted before a road-side shop. It was a small stationery shop, but food-stuffs and cold drink also could be had here. An old Filipino woman was its owner. My friend took me to this shop and introduced me to the lady. She received us with a smile and without delay offered us two glasses of cold drink for which she refused to receive the price from us. After an exchange of a few words with her we left the shop. My friend's house was located just opposite it.

My friend lived in a rented house, poorly built of bamboos and cocoa-leaves. When in his teens, he left home one morning with a few silver coins in his pocket and came to Philippine where he had been living since. He married an educated Filipino girl, an employee in a municipality.

It was a tiny village inhabited by only ten families—all poor. After lunch my friend took me to one of the families to introduce to an elderly man, still a labourer in a gold mine. He had one and only one house and that too was poorly built of bamboos and cocoa-leaves. He seemed to suffer from both sun and shower, and I felt pity for him, his children and wife. Inside the house I found nothing, absolutely nothing save and except a suitcase and one cot with one piece of blanket on. When I asked the

man, who could speak English fluently, how he could manage to provide his five children with bedding, he replied : 'Well, I and my wife sleep on this bare floor while our children occupy the cot'. I found no cooking apparatus in the house and so I asked him next how and where they used to cook their food. Promptly came the reply : 'Why, we have a daily market where cooked food can be had. We buy our food daily and use plantain leaves for plates.' How pathetic is the story of this family ! How distressing it is to view a picture in which a few live in luxury at the expense of many who seem to eke out their existence simply to add to that few's luxury and pleasure !

After a pretty long stay here in Manila I started for Baguio, a long way off. It was December 12. The road is asphalted, somewhere laid with smooth concrete. It was very pleasant to cycle along this way, though running up and down some small hills. Seldom have I found such a smooth road in other countries. Villages on the way occur at long distances. Most of the villages are small and tell a very sad tale about their economic condition. The houses are built of cocoa-leaves and bamboos on raised platforms. Paddy is the principal crop of the country and everywhere cocoas grow in abundance. Sugarcane too is found in great quantity in the villages.

At about nine I reached Sanfernando after covering a distance of some thirty-five miles. Here I stayed in a Chinese hotel for the day.

Sanfernando is a small town, but in population the Chinese seem to be the majority. There are several Indians too here. They are businessmen. The Chinese have penetrated in hundreds and thousands even into the remotest parts of the country and at the first sight the towns seem to be Chinese. There is hardly a town in Philippine where the Indians have not settled, but they are few in comparison to the Chinese. The Indians have made silk-business almost their monopoly while the Chinese deal in other articles, and they together have pushed the natives to the background particularly in the commercial sphere, and so economically the Filipinos are a very poor people.

The following morning I resumed my journey and this day halted at Tarlac, another town at a distance of some forty-five miles. Here too I rested in a Chinese hotel. Tarlac is a small town. It has a college. Here live several Indians, mostly businessmen.

Enroute to Tarlac I came across many Chinese hotels and restaurants even in the villages. The people of the remotest parts, even the illiterates, speak English as their mother-tongue, and so the English-knowing travellers feel no difficulty in this country. And it shows how far the Americans have advanced the country in the sphere of education. It can better be understood if one takes into account the condition of education in the country during the Spanish rule which lasted about four hundred years. When the

Spaniards left Philippine, there were only 1 University, 40 Secondary schools and 2160 Primary schools in the country while to-day one finds as many as 48 Universities, 388 Secondary schools and 6695 Primary schools, and students on the roll in all those institutions are 1,325,521 out of a population of some twelve million. Co-education prevails except in the theological institutions. With the establishment of the Commonwealth Government classes for military education have been opened in every University.

In so small a country as Philippine there are no less than eighty dialects of which ten can claim to have grammars and literatures. The following are the ten languages : (1) Tagalog, (2) Bisaya, (3) Panayan, (4) Samar-leyek, (5) Aklan, (6) Iloco, (7) Bical, (8) Pampangan. (9) Pangasinan, (10) Ibanang. Each of the languages is quite different from the other and so the people speaking different dialects can hardly understand one another. But they have got over the difficulty by introducing English. Spanish too many people understand.

The people whom we call Filipinos are not the real natives of the soil, they being the descendants of the Malayan and the Indonesian settlers. They seem to have inherited something of the Indian culture and civilisation which enlightened their forefathers when in their own land. The real Filipinos are called 'Aetas', living in jungle in the primitive stage of civilisation. Most of them are naked and seldom do

they come to the civilised localities. They are dark and short. They look fierce. Often they are found to perform ceremonies with human blood. Though they are barbarous, they appear to me more honest and morally better than many of the civilised people.

The Filipinos are as dark as the Indians, but they have flat nose and round face. The ladies are very fond of long hair, though most of them have adopted European costume with their husbands and brothers. Their staple food is rice. They relish dry fish very much. Like other Far Eastern people they also do not relish spices in the curry. They use cocoa-nut oil in their food. They eat with fingers like ourselves, but many of the educated people use fork and spoon.

It is only a few centuries ago that Islamism came here through the Dutch East Indies. Christianity came with the Spaniards. According to the latest census the Christians form the vast majority of the population. They are about ten million while the Muslims are only one million or so.

Philippine is a country very rich in mineral resources. It contains hundreds of mines of silver and gold, copper and iron, but they are exploited mostly by the Americans and therefore come to little or no material benefit of the natives. The economic condition of the labourers engaged in these mines is a bit better than that of other labourers, but yet they are as much discontented as others are. Of all the people the peasants are the worst sufferers who are struggling

for their very existence. It is pleasing to note that many peasants in this country use tractors for ploughing their fields.

It was December 14—the day I left Tarlac for Baguio. I reached the town at dusk after a long tedious journey up the mountains. Nearly half the distance I had to cover by walking, cycling along this way being impossible.

Baguio is the best health-resort in Philippine, situated about five thousand feet above sea-level. To the natives it is the paradise of Philippine.

How interesting and pleasing it is to sight when the tribesmen of the neighbouring hills in scanty clothes mingle with the civilised people in the market! The appearance of these tribesmen and their customs and manners bear a striking resemblance with those of our tribesmen. In other islands also the same resemblance attracted my notice, but I know not if they had ever any intercourse with one another. Probably we are born with certain common features.

The few days I stayed here passed swiftly in the sweet company of my new acquaintances. Not even for a moment I felt that I was away, far from my dear native land. Most likely I am made of a different stuff. Everywhere I was rather fortunate in having some sincere friends in whose love and affection I often lost myself, and thus I passed days and months together among the foreigners.

One morning I met an American gentleman. He

was an officer in the Baltac gold mine. This mine is only six miles from the town. Within a short time we grew to intimacy. On the eve of his parting he invited me to their mine and I was so glad to accept it. I was given a hearty welcome there. My friend took me round the different departments and showed me how the stones containing gold were powdered and gold extracted therefrom with a lotion, and then how unrefined gold was obtained from that water by drying it. It was very interesting.

It is the biggest gold mine in Philippine. The workshop is about four miles from the mine which is about five thousand feet deep. The gold is not refined here; it is sent to California for the purpose. It is an American concern. Its officers are all Americans.

Baguio is a small town, but it looks like a picture. Its streets and lanes are very clean,—all asphalted. Its houses are quite good,—all are buildings. The vast pond and the gardens have added to the charm of the town. Its surroundings too are attractive. Yes, it is a proper place for the poets. It is a town and gives much of the amenities of town-life amidst the calm and quiet atmosphere of a village.

Not very far from the town stands an observatory on the peak of a hill. Here one is caught by a charming scenery. He forgets himself in the midst of natural beauties. Really it is a paradise!

After a few days' comfortable stay here with a Sindhee merchant I returned to Manila. This



time I experienced no such difficulty as I had felt to walk up the high mountains to reach Baguio ; on the other hand, it was a pleasant journey. But a little incident on the way robbed me of all my pleasure of the journey. While I was cycling down the mountains, I was suddenly stopped at a bend by some notorious fellows. They did not care even to hear my say inspite of my fervent requests ; on the other hand, they threatened my life. So I allowed them without a word of protest to take away the cash I had with me and in my suitcase. On reaching the neighbouring town I went direct to the police-station to report the matter, but I know not what its result was.

After returning to Manila I stayed a few days and this time for a boat for Celebes. The days seemed to be passing very swiftly and the day of my departure really stepped in at last. There is only one company running passenger-ships between the islands, and as they have no rival, they can charge any amount for passage. The fare is very dear. There is a rule that no foreigners other than the Chinese will be allowed to travel other classes than 1st class. Indeed, one can travel second class with the permission of the captain of the ship. As the rule applied to me also, I sought the permission of the captain to travel at least second class and I was allowed.

For fairly a long time till the boat withdrew its adder from the pier I had a pleasant talk with Mr.

Soban Singh and other friends of mine who came to see me off. But as the moment for our separation came, I changed completely. I turned sad and pale, and for a long time after we had taken leave of each other I felt lonely, very much lonely. Even to-day when I remember my friends in different countries, I become impatient to see them again, feel restless and find no peace.

It was January 9, 1936,—the day I left Manila for Celebes by s. s. Tjibadak. I booked a 2nd class passage, and the ticket was obtained after depositing one hundred and fifty guilders (100 cents=1 guilder=about Re 1-12as.) with the shipping authorities. The deposit money is returned if the traveller leaves the Dutch East Indies within six months, otherwise it is forfeited.

Our boat contained as many as five classes, namely, 1st class, 2nd class (A), 2nd class (B), 3rd class and deck. The last three classes were occupied solely by the Chinese. Most of my co-passengers were travellers, of course not like myself, mostly Americans, and I had a nice time with them. The weather was exceptionally good.

## CELEBES

After long five days of monotonous voyage we reached the waters of Macassar in the morning of the 14th January. The tiled houses of Macassar amidst innumerable cocoas came to our view early in the morning and it brought us immense joy. We were growing impatient to land more and more as the boat was drawing nearer the harbour. Soon it entered the breakwater. A small crowd, mostly natives, gathered on the pier, some with little or no object and some for according welcome to their friends and relations. The natives were clad in *loongee* with fej caps on their heads. Most of them were thin and tall as we the Bengalees are. From their appearance and dress, their houses and innumerable cocoas it appeared to be a part of our own country. It was rather difficult for me to distinguish between Celebes and India.

At about ten our boat touched the pier and I landed without much delay. Outside the Customs House I enquired of several natives in English about hotels, but they could understand not even a word of what I had said. So, they took me to the police-station close by, but there too I found none to help me. At last I came out and while looking for a hotel, I met a countryman of mine. It is difficult for me to express in words how glad I was to see him at that time. He

took me to his house instead of to a hotel. He was a businessman. There are several Indian merchants here.

Macassar is quite a big town. Its population is about 80,000, of whom 3,500 are Europeans, 15,500 Chinese and 1,000 other Asiatics. Of the Europeans most are Dutch, the ruler of the Island.

It is the biggest port in the country. It trades mainly with the Dutch East Indies. The town looks beautiful because of its fine situation facing the Strait of Macassar with hills in the background.

After three days in Macassar I proceeded to Malino, said to be the best health-resort in the island. It is about 3300 ft above sea-level. The road was muddy and slippery because of heavy showers and therefore it was a Herculean task for me to go this way. I went on, sometimes cycling and sometimes walking, and at dusk reached my destination. I put up here in a Chinese hotel. Charges were two guilders per day.

Malino is a small town, but neat and clean. Its calmness and quietness with its beautiful surroundings attracts many a tourist. Taxi being the only means of communication it is difficult to go to the town any day one wishes.

On returning to Macassar after two days I went to visit the waterfall of Bantimurung, situated some 1000 ft above sea-level. It is only twenty-eight miles from the town. The same day I came back and decided to catch a boat for Bali the day following.

Celebes is a big island, separated from Borneo by

the Strait of Macassar. It is mountainous and rich in mineral resources. It enjoys tropical climate, but its heat is tempered by sea-breeze. Its monsoon period is January and February.

The population of the land is estimated at 2,000,000. Most of them are of Malayan blood and they are the civilised people of the island ; the real natives of the soil are still uncivilised, living in jungle.

Most of the people are Muslims and *loongee* is their national costume. Though Muslims they are and enjoined by their religion to observe purdah, the females do not cover their breasts even, not to speak of their face. And they move in public freely in that condition, but they feel no delicacy for that ; because it is their habit.

January 22. This day I left Macassar and with it Celebes by a Dutch boat bound for Boeleleng in Bali. I was a 2nd class passenger.

The same day in the evening I had the bitterest experience of my sea-life. We were overtaken by a terrible cyclone, no sooner had we gone out of the waters of Macassar. The whole day was cloudy and it was raining all the while. Against such inclemency of weather our boat sailed from Macassar. And towards evening the weather turned worse. By now we reached a place from where no trace of land could be found. The sun was about to set. It became dark and the coming event was casting its shadow before. We apprehended some danger.

Suddenly a severe stormy wind came and passed over us, and immediately the alarm-bell of the ship was rung. Without a moment's delay we went to our respective beds. A cyclone arose. The appearance of the Pacific changed completely. Now no one could call it pacific. I became frightened to see the mountain-like waves through the glassy windows and felt like a helpless boy. And really we were helpless. The waves seemed to be passing over the deck, and the ship appeared to be no better than a straw. The nature seemed to be ready to strike at man's pride of intellect and achievements. From the neighbouring rooms the cries of the children and their mothers were floating on to me. Many of those who seemed to have little faith in God were now the loudest in their voice to pray to Him. My condition also was none too good, but worse was my room-mate's. He kept his eyes closed in fear. Our boat was of course running as before. About six hours after the cyclone stopped, the ocean became a bit calm, and we heaved a sigh of relief.

## BALI

After a day's voyage from Macassar we reached the waters of Boecleng, a noted sea-port of Bali, the day following in the afternoon. As it had no proper harbour, our boat anchored in the sea about a mile away from the shore. From here the town looked very beautiful. Only a few houses with tiles on came to our view and they seemed to be peeping from behind the cocoas. And on the back of this town stands a hill with all its loveliness.

The passport officer came to our boat in time to examine our passports and receipts for the deposit of one hundred and fifty guilders. This ceremony over, we were permitted to land. Meanwhile several small country-boats came to carry us ashore. We two, myself and a European, hired one boat for ourselves and paid the boatman only fifty cents each. It took us about half an hour to reach the shore and I was so happy to set my foot on the soil of Bali, an island of Hinduism. It is the only land outside India where Hinduism prevails with all its magnificence, and in fact it is the only religion of the land.

The following morning I set out to visit the famous Singsit Temple. It lies in a village, some six miles from the town. I hired a calesa which cost me only ten cents.

The temple stands surrounded by a wall. On the



pillars at the entrance there are several images of gods and demons and they caught my sight from a distance. I entered through this gate and came before another which was closed from inside. I tapped at the door and it opened instantly. I went in and found myself in a spacious yard. Here I found at least fifty natives of all ages and sexes seated in deep devotion on the grassy ground before the temples. It was a festival day and hence all those devotees came there to offer *puja*. A priest assisted by his wife and a Brahmin girl was performing the *puja* from outside the temples. There are three temples close to one another and beside them several rest-houses for the devotees.

The Balinese never install images of their deities inside any temple. They build images on the outer walls of the temples and hence they have not to enter a temple to perform a *puja*.

While the devotees and their priest were in deep devotion, some dogs often came and dashed against them in the course of their loitering. What surprised me most now was that they were performing their *puja* in the same manner as before despite the touch of the dogs. In the hands of most of the devotees I found long sheets of palm leaves containing the *puja-mantras*. These *mantras* were in Sanskrit written in their own characters. The priest purified the water to be used for *puja* by a mantra which includes the names of the seven sacred rivers of our Hindusthan.

After the Puja the priest came to bless the devotees by sprinkling the sacred water over their heads with the ends of *durba*. And when it was over, the devotees approached the priest with little pots in their hands for taking *charanamritam* home. After all this was over, the priest distributed *prosadam* among them. So long I was only thinking about the caste of the priest who had no sacred thread with him. Unable to come to any definite conclusion about his caste, I approached him at last to ask with an apology as to what caste he belonged. To this he replied without any hesitation that he was a *Sudra* by caste, and further added that everyone in his country to whatever caste he belonged was fully entitled to perform the priestly functions.

The Balinese are all Hindus and they are proud of that. Most of them are the descendants of those Javanese Hindus who fled away to Bali in fear of being converted to Islamism by the Muslim missionaries who went there to preach their religion. But the Muslim preachers did not visit Bali for the purpose and it is why the Balinese are still Hindus while all their kith and kin in Java are all Muslims.

It is gratifying to note that the old form of Hinduism prevails in Bali. The society there is not divided into so many factions by castes and sub-castes as in our country. The Balinese recognise only four principal castes of Hinduism and none other. And then there is no restriction in their intercoursing with

one another in social matters. Inter-caste marriage and inter-dining always take place in the society. The demon of untouchability is not to be visible in the society in any shape or form. It is a good feature of the society that the son of a priest does not inherit his father's profession. A public priest is elected by the Brahmins. And it is after the election that the priest performs his thread-ceremony. It is not necessary that he should always wear the sacred thread. He wears it only when it is needed. He leads a true Brahmin life since his election to priesthood. He takes his meal only once a day and that too vegetarian food. He says his prayer every day before breakfast. But other Brahmins do neither pray nor wear any sacred thread in their life. They eat even pork, but the non-Brahmins are more advanced! They feel no scruple to take even beef. They take their meals even with the Muslims and their society tolerates it. The Muslims in Bali are tolerable outcasts.

In the matter of marriage also the Balinese are very liberal. The Brahmins can marry girls belonging to the lower castes, but the Brahmin girls can not marry the non-Brahmins. So long the female widows were not allowed to marry and even to-day most of them do not marry, but if anyone does, the society does not object to it. *Suttee pratha* is said to have prevailed here until the dawn of the present century when it was abolished by the Dutch authorities. In many matters the Balinese seem to be men

of medieval age ; all the same, in many other matters they are of progressive outlook. And it is their catholicity of outlook that has saved the Hindu society there from disintegration.

The people of Bali also like the Indian Hindus cremate the dead. As their funeral ceremony is an expensive affair, they perform it generally in the months of August, September and October when it seldom rains. And until then they keep the dead body buried. Meanwhile the poor people collect funds for the purpose. The poor Brahmins who cannot afford to bear the heavy expenses for the funeral ceremony are permitted by their social law to bury the body for a maximum period of one year, but this law does not apply so rigidly to the non-Brahmins. They perform *Sradh* ceremony on the 3rd, 7th and the 11th day as we do. All their *mantras* and *tantras* are Indian and therefore in Sanskrit. But it is difficult to find a scholar in Sanskrit in Bali. The people cannot take any lesson on Sanskrit, though many of them are very eager to learn the language.

The same day after lunch I proceeded to visit Singaradja, the capital of Bali, only two miles from Boe leleng. It is a small town and there is practically nothing to see here. Its streets are metalled and clean. At every crossing of roads there are several images of gods and demons. Wherever one goes in Bali, he finds images, images and images only.

Boe leleng also is a small town, but the majority of

its population are foreigners, mostly Chinese. There are many Arabian and Indian Muslims here. Most of the foreigners are businessmen. They have pushed the natives to the background in the commercial sphere.

I would feel rather ashamed when I had come across the native girls with bare breasts in the streets. The women of Bali never cover their upper body and they wear no delicacy even when they approach the foreigners in that state of nakedness. Indeed, it is their habit and so they do not find anything to feel shy of. But one should not take from it that they are immoral in the sense we understand.

After one complete day and night in Boecleng I left for Antosary, a small town at a distance of about forty miles. The road runs over the high hills. I went on along this way sometimes by walking and sometimes by cycling, and thus I covered the distance, reaching the town at about mid-day. Here I stopped for the day.

Antosary is a town which is the meeting place of several roads running to different places in different directions. This town too contains hundreds of temples and images of deities and except them there is nothing here worth a visit.

The following day I started for Den Pasar. It took me only six hours to cover the distance. I put up in a Chinese hotel on the main street of the town. On the way I came across many villages and villagers

and had a chance to peep into their mode of living. The natural scenery was very pleasing to sight.

The villages of Bali are small, but there too the Chinese and the Arabs have penetrated in hundreds to make fortune. I was so sorry to see the natives being squeezed out in this way by the foreigners. The natives do not feel it yet; because their wants are few, they being not so educated and advanced, and it is why they can so easily meet their needs from their income from agriculture. They seem to be little interested in industry and commerce.

Bali has got a very fertile soil covetable even to the peasants of agriculturally advanced countries. They reap harvest three or four times a year. The nature too favours them with rains all throughout the year. How pleasing it is to sight fields—some with green crops, some with ripe and some with sprouting seeds—all side by side. Never in its life it has experienced any famine. It knows nothing even about the last world-wide economic depression which caused a panic in the minds of the peasants of the world. The people have never known nor do they know now what hunger means. They are simple and are contented with their simple habits. They hanker neither after gorgeous and costly clothes nor after a radio-set or a newspaper or things of the sort which are considered to be the daily necessities of a present-day man. To put it in a nutshell, they seem to be the people of that age

when the people of the world were simple and were contented with simple things. Really, it is a country most liked by persons like myself who have grown sick of the present civilisation and of the present world—a world where one oppresses another, one class exploits another, one country conquers another for exploitation, and where the elementary rights of a man are not guaranteed.

Bali is a small island, lying only one mile or so to the south of Java between the Java sea and the Indian Ocean. Its area is only 2,296 sq miles. It has several volcanoes, of which Kintamani is the biggest, and of the mountains Mount Gunong Agung is the highest, it being 10,560 ft high.

This small island enjoys a very bracing climate. Its tropical heat is tempered by sea-breeze and frequent showers. It enjoys almost the same climate throughout the year; it knows no winter. The temperature varies very little, and so it is all the more enjoyable. It can claim to enjoy spring all the year round. It experiences heavy showers from November to July and less in other months.

The houses in the villages are built mostly of cocoa-leaves and straws while those in the towns are made of tiles and wood. As the joint-family system prevails here, a family requires several houses for accommodating so many of its members, and almost every family has a deity for worship. Most of the houses are surrounded by mud walls. Their



principal deities are *Brahmma*, *Vishnu*, *Maheswara*, *Indra* and *Luxmi*.

According to the census of 1930 the population of this tiny island is 1,101,373. The people are dark as the Indians. They have flat nose and round face. They are short in stature and their physique is quite good. Loongee is their national costume and they wear a kind of *pugree* on their head. Their staple food is rice. They are very fond of fish and meat. They use spices in the curry. They like chilly-paste very much. Cocoa-nut oil is the only oil they use. The cocoas grow in abundance in this land. They are very fond of betel. They are found always chewing betels with nut and lime.

In education they are a very backward people. Only a few Primary schools are there to make them literate. There is no newspaper in the land. Radio is a thing unknown to them. To put it in a word, this island seems to be divorced from the rest of the world, and in fact it is so. They do not read newspapers and books, nor do they listen to radio-broadcasts and travel abroad and trade with other countries. How can they then know the world outside their country, and really they are not disturbed by the happenings in the world. In a sense, it seems to be a place out of the world wherein we live. The people are cultured, though not educated. The Dutch Government, the ruler of their destinies, are to be congratulated on their wise decision not to

allow any outsider to interfere in their social affairs.

The Dutch set their foot on this island first in 1597 and then in 1849 when they conquered the two small towns of Boecleng and Singaradja, and since then they had been engaged in war against the native princes till about 1906 when the whole island came under their banner. It is Cornelis Houtman and his men who visited this island on the first occasion.

The one whom I called on just after my arrival at Den Pasar was Mr. Keshan Lal, a countryman of mine. He founded a private school there. He was very kind to offer his services at my disposal. The same day after lunch Mr. Keshan Lal took me to the famous temple 'Nambanang Badung.' It lies at one extremity of the town. It is about five centuries old, at present in decaying condition. On the pillars at its entrance stand two demons probably to protect the temple from the intruders. Inside the enclosure there are several temples, in one of which I found a big image of a snake. But the images of deities in Bali look quite different from those in India.

The following day I was happy to talk with a native priest. As I am not conversant with Malayan language which is spoken by most of the people of the Dutch East Indies, I took my Indian friend with me. His house was not very far from my place. It was surrounded by a high wall. On entering the courtyard we found a boy playing with dust under an orange

tree. He was a son of the priest. He took us to his father who was then writing letters on a mattress in the verandah of his house. As he saw us, he came forward to receive us most warmly and conducted us to a small room of the house where we shortly found ourselves engaged in a conversation on Hinduism in Bali. In the course of our conversation he regretted very much to say that there was no Indian scholar in Sanskrit in their country from whom they could learn their sacred language.

Towards evening when I was deeply engaged in a book on the balcony of my hotel, a Chinese came and chose his seat on an arm-chair by me. And a while after he broke his silence for making some queries of me. I did not at all welcome his presence, but I could not say him anything, because he had as much right as myself had to use the balcony. However, etiquette demanded me to answer him properly, and I showed him the courtesy worthy of a gentleman. And gradually he dragged me into a discussion on politics. By the way Mahatma Gandhi came in for our discussion. I was so happy to hear him talking highly of our Gandhiji. But I was rather surprised when he said that Gandhiji was so very familiar in Bali that his picture could be found in many a house. I wondered, because I could not understand how a people who lived completely divorced from the rest of the world and who knew so little of other countries and who could read

neither books nor newspapers could know of a man, however great he might be, of a far off country. 'Really?' said I with an accent of astonishment. He said in reply: 'If you don't believe, come with me.' I readily agreed and accompanied him with a curious mind. He took me to a barber's shop wherein I really found a picture of Gandhiji on a wall. I felt curious to ask the owner why he kept that picture, whether he knew anything of the person or he kept the picture simply as a picture. To my questions he answered after a little pause: "You see, I know nothing of Gandhi, but I have heard that he is a very, very great man, considered to be an incarnation of our Lord Sri Krishna." Thus he summed up the impression of many of the Balinese about our Gandhiji.

Den Pasar is the biggest town, most famous of all in Bali, situated on a tableland. It has only one principal road which is asphalted. It is the only town in Bali which can boast of a museum. Besides several Chinese hotels there are two European hotels, of which Bali Hotel is the best. In those two hotels the guests are charged ten guilders or more per day while the charges in the Chinese hotels are only one guilder. In the Bali Hotel charming dances of the Balinese girls can be enjoyed twice in every week. With every rhythm of theirs the audience is carried away. Really it is a wonderful dance.

After staying four days in this town I started for

Gilmanoek in the morning of the 30th January, reaching there the day following at mid-day. I stayed the day there in the rest-house, hoping to reach Java by a launch next morning.

Gilmanoek is a small village, lying at the extremity of the island on the Java side. The distance between this village and Banjoewangi, the first town of Java, is about four miles. A ferry station has added some importance to the village. Launches ply between this village and Banjoewangi twice in every week.

Bali is a country most beautiful in natural scenery. It's a pity that it should be unfamiliar to most of the people of the world and especially to the Indian Hindus whose banner of religion it holds aloft.

It was February 1—the day I left the shores of Bali for Java. The steam launch which took me to Java was small. We were only eight passengers. The fare was only one guilder and fifty cents. The sea was calm and quiet, and it caused us no anxiety when we were crossing the sea by so small a launch. It took us only half an hour to reach the land of Java.

# JAVA

At Banjoewangi I stayed in an Indian hotel. It was a rare pleasure for me to put up in the hotels of our countrymen. I do not remember if I had found any Indian hotel in the far east beyond Burma and Singapur.

Banjoewangi is a small town, lying at the southern end of the island facing the sea with several volcanic hills behind. Most of its residents are foreigners, mostly Chinese. There are several Indians too. Its streets are wide and asphalted. It is the terminus of the road and the railway which run to the other extremity of the island.

After the day's rest here I proceeded to Sourabaya. The way is up and down, as it passes over several high hills. But the road is asphalted from end to end. The hills are not so covered with deep forests. Villages occur at short distances and towns at considerable distances on the way, and then there are Chinese hotels and rest-houses even in the villages where one can stay safely and comfortably. Plantains grow in abundance in the villages. After whole day's cycling I reached Probalinggo, a small town, in the evening and passed the night in a hotel.

Early in the day following I resumed my journey, reaching Sourabaya towards evening. I got my accommodation in quite a big Chinese hotel. The rent

of the room was two guilders per day. Though I stayed in the hotel, I took my meal outside in a Javanese restaurant. I relished the Javanese food; because they use spices in the curry as we do and their system of preparation also is very much like ours. And then the Javanese food is very cheap too. One meal consisting of one plate of rice, one dish of egg-curry and one dish of vegetable-curry along with some pickle cost me only fifteen cents.

The following morning I called on Mr. Kundan Das, a young educated Sindhee silk-merchant, to whom I was introduced by a common friend of ours. He was the president of the local Indian Merchants' Association and the vice-president of the Indian Sporting Club. He appreciated my enterprise very highly, and to receive me publicly he called a meeting of the Indians in which I was presented two purses on behalf of the said associations. The Sporting Club was organized some four years ago and its members contributed substantially to purchase a plot of land in the outskirts of the city. At present they have a beautiful club-house attached to their play-ground. Among the members there are Hindus, Muslims and Christians, all of whom are bound together by a common bond of love and fellowship. It is here in this club-house that Mr. Das introduced me to one Mr. De, the only Bengali in the city. When he learnt that I had put up in a hotel, he regretted very much and requested me to shift to his place. He wouldn't



allow me to stay anywhere else. And I complied with his request.

While here, I was very happy to get acquainted with Dr. Sutama, the greatest personality of Java, but alas! he is no more. Our first meeting occurred in one evening after two or three days of my arrival at the city. Mr. De also was with me. At the entrance of his house we were accorded a very warm welcome by the doctor who immediately conducted us to his drawing-room. It was a big room, nicely decorated with varieties of flowers, pictures and lights. As I stepped into the room, I was attracted by two pictures—one of our Lord Sri Krishna and the other of our goddess Kali. I was astonished not a little to see the pictures in his house. Gandhiji's picture also was there, but there was nothing in it to be surprised at. As he was presiding over a meeting of the executive body of their political association in the same room, he could not devote his whole time for me. Once he was coming to my table to chat with me, again he was returning to his colleagues to take part in their deliberations, and thus we continued our talk till about eleven when we stood up to wish him goodnight. He invited us to have our dinner with him next evening.

Dr. Sutama is a Muslim, though his was a Hindu name. He was then the officer-in-charge of a Government hospital. He was tall in stature and fair in complexion. He was the most lovable figure in Java

and it is why he was often described as the Gandhi of Java by many people. He was held in high esteem by one and all of his countrymen. He was the most sociable man. He charmed everyone who came in touch with him by his sweet manners.

The following evening at the dining-table I asked my revered friend Dr. Sutama in the course of our talk how he being a Muslim dared keep the pictures of the Hindu deities, and whether he did not feel wounded in his religious susceptibilities by their presence, to which he replied with a joke : "Well, I am not an Indian Muslim that the possession of pictures of the Hindu deities will endanger my life." He went on : "To-day I feel proud to say that I am the descendant of a Hindu. I have read with great interest and due reverence the holy scriptures of the Hindus, I mean—the Gita, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata." Proudly and with equal force he continued : "I have also read the history of Aryasthan. Sincerely speaking, I am always eager to visit the places of Rajputna where so many great heroes and heroines were born and played their parts. I am equally eager to meet Mahatma Gandhi, the great teacher of the modern world, who has brought new hope and courage to the down-trodden and exploited humanity." He then proceeded to narrate how an Indian Muslim approached to request him to throw away those pictures of Sri Krishna and Kali.

After dinner Dr. Sutama took me to their opera-



A dance by the native girls of Bali—an island where Hinduism prevails  
with all its magnificence.



house to show a social drama. The admission was regulated by tickets, but I was not required to pay anything, my revered friend being the president of the managing committee of the opera-house. It was a vast hall. We took our seats in the frontest row. On the front stands of the stage there were several paintings of the Javanese national leaders like Dr. Sutama and Mr. Sukarna. It is managed by Dr. Sutama's political organization.

Soon the play commenced with a national song in chorus. I would have understood very little of the drama, had Dr. Sutama not acted as an interpreter. It was really very interesting. I enjoyed it very much. Every actor and actress sang and danced with every word. The king came and began to sing and dance while talking with his servants; the queen came and she also began to sing and dance with every word. It reminded me of our Oria dramas and Bengali *kabi* and *jari* which have a striking resemblance with the Javanese theatrical art.

Sourabaya stands second amongst the cities of Java; its population is about two hundred thousand. It is situated at the southern part of the country, facing the Java Sea. It is a cosmopolitan city, the population being of diverse nationalities. Of the population the Chinese form the majority. The number of Indian residents is not insignificant; they are about five hundred, mostly hailing from Sind and Guzrat.

Its streets and lanes are all asphalted, wide and clean. For easy communication in the city there are trams, motor-buses, three-wheeled taxis besides rickshaws and calesas. Our Calcutta trams of the latest type are by far the best I have seen in different parts of the world. Rickshaws are pulled mostly by the Chinese. Of all the conveyances in the city the taxi is the most popular. Its fare is very cheap,—only a piece of ten cents for a distance of, say, one mile and half. Though a city of great importance Sourabaya has little attractive and well worth a visit save and except its zoo. The zoo is fairly a big one. In it there are several white monkeys who are conspicuous by their absence even in most of the important zoos of the world. Truly speaking, I have found white monkeys nowhere else. An aquarium has added to its importance and attraction.

While in Sourabaya I had the pleasure of coming into close contact with many sweet countrymen of mine, of whom most have gone out of my memory, though I regret that, and a few are still fresh in my mind. And among the few whom I remember to-day there is one Bengali Muslim who had settled there. One day he invited me and Mr. De to take our lunch with him at his house. Could there be any reason for me, a Brahmin, for refusing the invitation to dine—a thing said to be much coveted by the Brahmins? Certainly not. But how is it, my friend Mr. De was not less happy than myself though a non-

Brahmin by caste ! However, we accepted his invitation with pleasure and he was so happy.

From morning it was raining cats and dogs, and at mid-day even we saw no prospect of its early cessation. Our Muslim friend came to take us despite this inclement weather. We hired a taxi and started. After about half an hour's run we arrived at the village, but the taxi stood about a furlong away from his house. We could not help it. We got down and began to proceed along a narrow, zigzag path flooded with knee-deep rain-water. There were bamboo groves on both the sides. The scenery bore a striking resemblance with many a rural scenery of Bengal. The houses also looked like Bengal's. Our friend had three houses—all built of wood and straw. Round the houses were loitering several chickens, often crowing. These were all familiar scenes to me, and my mind went back at once to my native country. He treated us lavishly, but I was impressed more by his sense of hospitality.

After a few days in Sourabaya I left for Batavia. It was the 10th February. The road is tarred, excellent in condition. In fact, Java can be proud of its roads. Enroute to Batavia I took halts in the towns of Singasary, Grambanan, Borobudur, Mendut and Boitenzory. The towns are small, but some of them are important historical places. The existence of some Hindu temples and the ruins of many others in the villages and towns are the proofs positive of



the great influence Hinduism once exercised over the people of Java. In fact, it was a part of our Greater India. The influence of Hinduism is not extinct yet in the island, though almost all of its people have become Muslims. Still there are some Hindus in the island. Though the people have embraced Islam, they have retained many Hindu things. From their customs and manners and their names they seem to be Hindus. They do not accept Muslim names. They all take Hindu names, such as, Sutama, Sukarna, etc. The holy scriptures of the Hindus have still a great influence over the people. The villagers are still found to tell to their children many legends from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Then the Muslim ladies do not cover even their upper body, not to speak of their face.

Java is a mountainous island, situated very close to the equator, lying east and west between the Java Sea and the Indian Ocean. It has several big mountains, namely, Smeru (12,028 ft.) Slamet or Gedeh (11,244 ft.), Sumbing (10,965 ft.) and Merapi (9,469 ft.). Its tropical heat is tempered by sea-breeze. It gets showers almost all throughout the year.

It is an island, most densely populated. According to the latest census the population of the country is 41,719,524. Most of them are of Malayan blood. Loongee is their national costume both for men and women. Rice is their staple food, and they use curry-powder and cocoa-nut oil in the curry. They like

chilly-paste and pickle very much. Their process of preparing food is much the same as ours.

As I am not an ethnologist, I cannot, therefore, say accurately with whom the Malaysans had more intercourse—whether with the Southern Indians or with the Northerners, but if the customs and manners and architecture of a people have the right to say anything on the subject, I have then reasons to believe that they had more intercourse with the Southern Indians, particularly with the Travancoreans. In support of my contention let me say a few words about the dress and architecture of the two peoples. Loongee is the national costume of the Malaysans, of both the sexes. The Southern Indians also wear loongee, but it is only in Travancore where the ladies also wear loongee. The Malayan women do not cover their upper body, the Travancorean women also used not to cover their upper body. It is only for the last forty or fifty years that the Travancorean women have been covering their upper body. It is proved by the fact that even the educated women there use two pieces of cloths—one as a loongee and the other for covering the upper body. Then their food also is almost the same as the Malaysans', and the process of preparation of food of the former is not much different from the latter's. The former use cocoa-nut oil, the latter also use the same. And as regards the architecture of the Malaysans and the Southern

Indians, both bear a striking resemblance. The Southern Indians build scenes and scenery and images of deities on the outer body of a temple, the Malaysians also used to do the same and it is evident from the temples in Bali and Java. And these are ample evidences, I suppose, to support my contention.

Java is ruled by the Dutch. Like many other eastern countries it also fell a prey to the Dutch traders who came here first to trade. They played one native king against another and thus won the game. It is three hundred years or more that the Javanese people have been suffering under the Dutch rule. At present the island is governed by the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies whose headquarters are at Batavia, the principal city of Java. He is assisted in his administration by an Advisory Council which consists of some elected and some nominated members. The council was formed in 1916 when the people demanded Self-government.

The first political organization in Java was formed in the month of April, 1908, by late Dr. Sutarna. It was named 'Boedi Oetomo' and its aim and object was to develop the spirit of nationalism. In its infant stage its only concern was to spread education. In 1911 another political association named 'Sarekat Islam' was formed. Its founder was one Mr. Hadji Samoedi. In 1916 both the associations actively participated in politics and sent their representatives to the Advisory Council of the Governor-General,

newly formed in that year. In 1919 the Sarekat Islam was split up into two—one remained as a social organization and the other became a socialist organization whose leaders were (1) Mr. Moesa, (2) Mr. Alimin, (3) Mr. Tan Malaka. Within a short time the socialists established successfully their hold over the masses. They organized many strikes in the Government railways and factories during the three years between 1923 and 1926. In 1926 the peasants of Bantom and Padang rose in revolt against the Dutch authorities under the direct inspiration and leadership of the socialists, but as the revolt did not spread out, it was easily suppressed by the Government. At the heels of it came a severe repression over the people. The socialists of the Dutch East Indies were banished wholesale to the jungles of Dutch New Guinea where they are still rotting. In 1927 one more political organization was formed. Its name was 'Party National Indonesia'. Its leader was Mr. Sukarna who is widely known in Java as Engineer Sukarna. He declared 'Full Independence' for the Dutch East Indies as the goal of his organization. In 1934 this organization also got split up into two. Both the parties had the same goal, but they were divided in their opinion as regards the ways of approaching towards the goal. The Government became much afraid of these organizations, and so for nipping the political movements in the bud the authorities exiled all the leaders and members of both the parties. And

thus the political aspiration of the people has been successfully suppressed by the authorities, but who knows when this suppressed discontent of the people will burst forth like a bombshell. Boedi Oetoma is still in existence. It was reorganized in 1935 and renamed as 'Party Indonesia Raja'. It is interested chiefly in social activities. This in short is the whole history of the political movements in the Dutch East Indies.

It was February 16—the day I arrived at Batavia after a tedious journey. The following day in the evening a meeting of the Chinese students was held for hearing the thrilling tales of my travels and my impressions of the different countries I visited. In this country too the public and the press received me most cordially and hospitably. Soerabaiasch Handelsblad, the largest daily in the Dutch East Indies, edited and managed by the Dutch people, attached me so much importance that they devoted more than half the page for leader for my humble self.

Batavia is the biggest city in the Dutch East Indies, inhabited by more than three hundred thousand souls. It lies at some distance from its harbour at Priok. Its streets are asphalted, wide, neat and clean. It is the biggest educational centre in Java.

After three days in the city I left the shores of Java for Padang in Sumatra by a boat of the K. P. M. Shipping Agencies Ltd. I quite enjoyed the trip. There were several Indian traders bound for the same as myself, and I passed most of my time in their pleasant company.

# SUMATRA

We reached Padang three days hence, on the 19th day of February. In the town I secured my accommodation in a Chinese hotel. The charge was one guilder per day.

Padang is the biggest town in Sumatra. It is inhabited by more than eighty thousand souls, the majority of whom are Chinese. Its streets are tarred and clean. There are many people of our country here. Most of them are businessmen.

After two days' rest here I proceeded to Medan lying on the other side of the island. I started at cock-crow and arrived at a small town at mid-day. I rested here in a restaurant for sometime, took my lunch and then continued my journey on. The road runs across hills and forests. It was an up-hill task for me to cycle along this way. At long distances I found villages and towns. At dusk I reached a forest. The darkness was fast enveloping the earth. I began to cycle at a high speed to cross the forest, but could not, because I was soon overtaken by deep darkness of the night and every now and then the stillness in the forest began to be disturbed by roars of the wild animals. I got frightened and so decided not to proceed any further. As I had gone too far and more distance were yet to be covered to cross the forest, there could be no question of my turning back. I made up my mind to stay in the forest and became ready for its

consequences. I selected a spot beside the road for the purpose. I collected some dry wood and leaves for making fire. I gathered some more and kept it in stock to keep the fire around me always in flames. I kept wide awake and thus passed the night. Really it was a woeful night for me. The following day when the sun rose with all its brilliance, I resumed my journey and at about nine reached a town where I halted for the day. I reached Medan the day following and put up in a small Arabian hotel.

Medan is a big town ; its population is about fifty thousand, of whom about fifteen hundred are Indians, mostly Sikhs. The Sikhs have a gurudwara here. They have got also a school for proper education of their children. Here lives a Sultan who happens to be a descendant of the last independent king of the island, but he possesses no administrative power. He is given a princely allowance.

It is also a noted sea-port, but the town is some sixteen miles from the harbour. Here I decided to go to Singapur for catching a boat for East Africa.

Sumatra lies on the equator, but its heat is tempered to a great extent by sea-breeze. It is said to be the fifth largest island in the world, the area being 184,199 sq. miles. The entire island is covered with thick forests. It enjoys no winter. According to the census of 1930 the population of the island stands at 8,238,570. Most of the people are of Malayan blood. The real natives of the soil are still in the primitive



stage of civilisation. They are tall, strong and stout. Many of them wear no clothes. The national costume of the Sumatrans is loongee and their staple food is rice. They also use spices in the curry like their neighbours.

Long ago the Sumatrans were Hindus, but now most of them are Muslims. Though they profess the faith of Mohammed, they are still to be found to observe Hindu traditions. Many of them possess Hindu names even to-day, and the influence of the holy scriptures of the Hindus over them is not little.

The people speak Malay, but they write the language in Roman alphabets, the introduction of which has removed certain difficulties from the path of the learners of the language. It is a Dutch possession, ruled by a Governor responsible to the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies at Batavia.

It was February 25—the day of my sailing from Sumatra for Singapur. The following day in the evening our boat reached Singapur, but the passport-officer refused to allow me to land on the pretext that I had not got the name of Straits Settlements endorsed in my passport, although no such objection was raised on the previous occasion against my landing in the Straits Settlements. All my pleadings failed, and I was left in the custody of the purser. After a few hours our boat sailed back again. The purser wanted me to pay for the return journey, but I declined to do that saying : 'I am always eager to land here, and in fact I came for that. So, if you can, you can land me here.

I have got no objection. Or if you are unable to carry me back free, you can throw me down into the sea ?' Meanwhile the time for which I was allowed to stay in the Dutch East Indies expired, and so I had no hope of being permitted to land there too. What was apprehended happened at last. The Dutch passport authorities refused me the permit to land. I was now between fire and water. Several hours I had to spend on the boat alone and unfriended guarded by police until a police officer came and took me to Medan customs detention camp. He presented me before their chief who was an old Dutchman. He seemed to be considerate and sympathetic towards me. He heard my say with sympathy and attention and then said : 'You seem to be an educated gentleman. So I feel pity all the more for you. I won't send you to rot in the detention-camp. You better stay with one of my assistants and let me see what I can do for you.' So saying he called one of his assistants and asked him to look to my comforts. This gentleman was a native Christian. He lived in a small barrack. They were two families, living in the two ends of the barrack, and in a room in its middle I was accommodated. In fact, the customs authorities set apart this room for detaining the respectable passengers who were required to be detained for this reason or that. The room was well-furnished and good-looking. I was supplied my meal from the house of that Christian gentleman. I got my meal three times a day, and it was

quite a good food. At first I thought that I was really his guest, but soon I felt that I was a prisoner in his house. He wouldn't allow me to leave the compound of the barrack or to talk with any one. He himself even would not care to reply properly if I asked him anything. Thus I began to pass time tongue-tied. With the dusk he wanted me to return to my room, not to go outside again. At night he closed the doors of my room from outside, so that I could not escape. This house was situated just on a public road. And so I would often come and sit beside the road. When I had found the public moving freely, I would become impatient to be free, but I was helpless. If I had found an Indian passing by, I would feel an irresistible urge to go and talk with him, but the clerk and his family-members were my obstacles. Though the duration of my stay here as a respectable prisoner was hardly three days, I felt as if I had been in a prison alone and unfriended for a long, long time past. I began to feel as a bird in the cage. However, on the fourth morning I was relieved greatly of my worries to learn that the British Consul at Medan had sent a cable to the authorities of Penang, asking them to permit me to land, and that I would be sent by the evening boat. I was so happy to learn it, and eagerly I began to wait for the evening. Towards afternoon a clerk of the customs house came to inform me that everything was ready, and that I should accompany him without further delay.

I came to the harbour accompanied by the clerk. I booked a second class passage immediately and went aboard the ship, but here too the clerk came and remained with me until the boat withdrew its ladder from the pier. It is a pleasure to note that his behaviour with me was good all throughout.

It was only one night's journey. The passage cost me only fifteen guilders. At cock-crow our boat reached the waters of Penang and it anchored in the mid-sea. The passport-officers came and examined my passport and then permitted me to land without a word. But who knew then that I would be watched at every step by the *C. I. D.* police ?

In Penang I put up in a Chinese hotel, though Mr. Samual, my old friend whose hospitality I enjoyed on the previous occasion, requested me to stay with him. The following day in the morning I left Penang to proceed to Singapur by train for catching a boat for Africa. But as the train stopped at Kuala-Lumpur, the police superintendent, a European, came with a couple of Indian *C. I. D.* police to arrest me. The superintendent thought that I had been travelling either 1st class or 2nd class, and so he peeped into every 1st class and 2nd class compartment to find me out. He could not think that a world-tourist could be travelling 3rd class. And it is why he did not care to look into the 3rd class compartments. As luck would have it, I came out of my compartment to buy some food from the vendors just when he was about to leave the station

disappointed. At once one of his men drew his notice to me, and he came and asked: 'Are you Mr. Banerjee, travelling round the world?' I replied in the affirmative, apprehending nothing. Immediately he asked his men to bring down my luggage. When I asked him why he was arresting me, he shrugged his shoulders and said: 'Well, I can't tell what the matter is. I am acting under instructions from Penang. You are wanted there.' I turned sad and pale.

There was no train except at about mid-night for returning to Penang. The police booked a third class passage for me and sent me to Penang at their own expense. There was no policeman accompanying me, but at every station the C. I. D. police came to see if I were in the train. Early in the morning the train reached its destination on the opposite side of Penang. Without delay I got into a launch and when getting down at the jetty in Penang, several known faces came to my sight. They were C. I. D. police. They were so happy to find me back in their custody. Their superintendent asked me in a rude voice why I had run away from Penang. In reply I asked him to put questions in a better voice and in a better language which took us to an unpleasant passage-at-arms, in the course of which he said at the top of his voice: 'I won't allow you to proceed to Singapur. I will send you to India.' 'That is altogether a different question,' said I in reply. Two days after I took a boat for Madras. It was s. s. Rohna, a big boat.

Among my new acquaintances in the boat there was one Madrasee youngman. I was so sorry to hear the woeful tales of his life. He was an educated youngman. Unable to secure a job in his native province he went to Malay in search of the same. He heard much of the wealth and prosperity of Malay, and the story that a fool even can make his fortune there lured him to that country. But soon after his arrival he was disillusioned. Somehow or other he managed to make both ends meet there for about a year, but later he found it difficult to earn even one meal a day. At last several of his countrymen in Malay collected the passage-money for him, and thus helped him to return to his motherland.

This voyage was a bit trying to me, because all the way from Penang to Madras our boat rolled heavily. When the boat was passing between the Andaman and the Nicobar islands, which could be distinctly seen from our boat, my mind became heavy with thoughts for so many of our political prisoners who had been undergoing their sentences in the Andaman. The island of Andaman looks very lovely from a distance, but who knows what a terrible hell it is to the prisoners !

After seven days of voyage the boat reached Madras and I was so happy to set my foot again on the soil of my dear motherland. It was March, 1936.

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